

# The Voice of the Prophets:

Wisdom of the Ages, Volume 5 of 12

Compiled By Marilyn Hughes

*The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!*  
[www.outofbodytravel.org](http://www.outofbodytravel.org)



*The Light of the World , Holman Hunt*

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Throughout time . . . That They  
Might Have Voice!

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Wisdom of the Ages, Volume 5 of 12

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# The Voice of the Prophets:

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The purpose of this series of texts is very simple. We have striven to compile the best of the better known *and* the least known of the ancient sacred texts from every religion throughout the world and throughout time.

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# Volume 5

## CHAPTER FIVE MYSTERY RELIGION

### Wisdom of Thoth/Hermes the Prophet (Who are Considered Different Incarnations of the Same Prophet) and Mystery Religion

### Wisdom of the Egyptians

*The Wisdom of the Egyptian, The Story of the Egyptians, the Religion of the Ancient Egyptians, the Ptah-Hotep and the Ke'gemini, the "Book of the Dead," the Wisdom of Hermes Trismegistus, Egyptian Magic, the Book of Thoth, Edited, and with an Introduction, By Brian Brown, New York: Brentano's, [1923]*



OSIRIS KHENTI AMENTI, the Great God, seated in his shrine of fire. In front of Osiris is the Eye of Horus and behind him stand the Goddesses ISIS and NEPHTHYS.

*From the Papyrus of Hunefer in the British Museum*

## THE WISDOM OF THE EGYPTIANS

### CHAPTER I

#### THE STORY OF EGYPT

EGYPT has been called the "Father of History and the Mother of Civilization" and well may she be called both for her influence upon the ancient world must have been great. Thales, the founder of Greek philosophy, was a student of Egyptian thought and investigated all of their theories of the universe as well as their ideas about the gods. Herodotus, a Greek historian who visited Egypt about 450 B.C., has given a vivid description of the country and people, at that time and about 8 B.C. Diodorus Siculus, a Greek traveler, wandered up and



down the bank of the Nile and he, like Herodotus, gives in his book a description of the country and the people. By far the most interesting, as well as accurate, account is given by Strabo, the great geographer of Greece, who was a contemporary of Diodorus. About 90 A.D., Plutarch wrote his celebrated treatise on Isis and Osiris, a work that Egyptologists today consider a most accurate presentation of the ideals and traditions of ancient Egypt.

In speaking of the sources for the historical material pertaining to the ancient Egyptian, Auguste Mariette in his short history said: "First and foremost in value and in quantity are the Egyptian monuments themselves: the temples, palaces, tombs, statues, and inscriptions. These have supreme authority, because they have the advantage of being the incontestable evidence of the events which they record. They have not long enjoyed this distinction, as the secret of the mysterious writing with which they are covered was, until lately, lost; and it was difficult to see in these relics of antiquity anything more than lifeless stones, devoid of interest. But about eighty-five years ago there appeared, in the person of Champollion, a true genius, who succeeded, by his keen insight, in throwing the most unexpected light upon the darkness of the Egyptian script. Through him these old monuments, so long silent, caused their voices to be heard; by him was the veil torn asunder, and the Egypt of bygone days, so renowned for her wisdom and power, stood revealed to the modern world.

No longer are the monuments objects of hopeless curiosity, rather are they books of stone wherein may be read, in legible writing, the history of the nation with which they were contemporaneous.

"Next to the monuments in importance comes the Greek history of Egypt, written by Manetho, an Egyptian priest, about B.C. 250; and were the book itself in existence, we could have no more trustworthy guide. Egyptian by birth and priest by profession, Manetho, besides being instructed in all the mysteries of his religion, must have also been conversant with foreign literature, for he was a Greek scholar, and equal to the task of writing a complete history of his own country in that language. If only we had that book today it would be a priceless treasure; but the work of the Egyptian priest perished, along with many others, in the great wreck of ancient literature, the burning of the great library at Alexandria, and all we possess of it are a few fragments preserved in the pages of subsequent historians."

## ORIGIN OF THE EGYPTIAN RACE

Prof. Wallis Budge writes on the Egyptian race: "The flint tools and weapons that have been found on the skirts of the desert at various places in Egypt, and that are generally admitted to be older than those of the Neolithic period, i.e., the New Stone Age, render it extremely probable that the country was inhabited by men in the Palæolithic period, i.e., the Old Stone Age. The questions that naturally arise in connection with them are: Who were they? To what race did they belong? If they were immigrants, where did they come from? In the limited space afforded by a single chapter it is impossible to enumerate even the most important of the arguments of which these questions have formed the subjects, or the principal theories, old and new, of the origin of the Egyptians. Fortunately Egyptian archæology, even in its present imperfect state, supplies a number of facts, which will suggest answers to these questions that are tolerably correct; and, as time goes on and the results of further research are perfected, our knowledge of these difficult questions may assume a decisive character. The human remains that have been found in Neolithic graves in Egypt prove that the Egyptians of the Neolithic period in upper Egypt were Africans, and there is good reason for thinking that they were akin to all the other inhabitants of the Nile Valley at that time. When the great geological change took place that turned into a river valley the arm of the sea that extended as far as Esnâ, and the Nile deposits had formed the soil of Egypt, their ancestors migrated from the south to the north and occupied the land made by the Nile. Whether these facts apply equally to the Delta cannot be said, for no Neolithic graves in the Delta are known. Egyptian tradition of the Dynastic period held that the aboriginal home of the Egyptians was Punt, and though our information about the boundaries of this land is of the vaguest character, it is quite certain that a very large portion of it was in central Africa, and it probably was near the country called in our times 'Uganda.' There was in all periods frequent intercourse between Egypt and Punt, and caravans must have journeyed from one country to the other at least once a year. In the dynastic period several missions by sea were despatched to the port of Punt to bring back myrrh and other products of the country, which were so dear to the heart of the kinsmen of the Puntites who were settled in Egypt.

"Now, if the inhabitants of the southern portion of the Valley of the Nile were attracted to the good and fertile land of Egypt, it follows, as a matter of course, that foreign peoples who heard of this rich land would migrate thither in order to partake of its products and to settle in it. The

peoples on the western bank--Libyans--and the dwellers in the eastern desert would intermarry with the native Egyptians, and the same would be the case with the negro and half-negro tribes in the Sûdân. At a very early period, and certainly in Neolithic times, a considerable number of Semites must have made their way into Egypt, and these came from the Arabian peninsula on the other side of the Red Sea, either for trading purposes or to settle in Egypt. Some of these crossed the Red Sea in its narrowest part, probably near the straits of Bâb al-Mandib at the southern end of it, and made their way into the country where the comparatively modern town of Sennaar now stands, just as their descendants did some three to five thousand years later. Here they would find themselves not only in fertile land, but they would also be in touch with the tribes living in the region where, from time immemorial, alluvial gold has been found in considerable quantities. Others of the Semites must have made their way into the Delta by the Isthmus of Suez, and there is no doubt that by intermarriage they modified the physical characteristics of many of the natives. Others, again, must have entered Egypt by way of the very ancient caravan route through the Wadi Hammânât, which left the Red Sea near the modern town of Kusêr and ended on the Nile near Kenâ in upper Egypt. It is impossible to think that the Semites in Arabia had no seagoing boats in which to cross the Red Sea, and that those who lived on the coast halfway down the Red Sea would be obliged to go so far north as the Isthmus of Suez, or so far south as Bâb al-Mandib before they could cross over into Africa.

"In the case of the natives of the Delta foreign influences of another kind would be at work. Here would flock traders of all kinds from the land that is now called Palestine, and from the islands of the Mediterranean, and from the seacoast and the countries inland to the west of Egypt. Some think that even in the Neolithic period there were many settlers who had come from the southern countries of Europe. If the above remarks are only approximately true, we are justified in assuming that the population of the Valley of the Nile was even at this early period very much mixed. It must, however, be noted that neither Libyans, nor Semites, nor seafaring folk of any kind, altered the fundamental characteristics of the African dwellers on the Nile."

## THE BEGINNING OF EGYPTIAN HISTORY

Towards the end of the New Stone Age the Egyptians acquired the knowledge of working in copper, and with tools of this metal they found themselves able to do many things that were before impossible to

them. With copper drills they perforated beads and hollowed out stone jars and vessels, and with copper knives and chisels they sculptured stone figures of men, animals, etc., with a skill that was truly wonderful. They had long known how to produce fire and one of its principal uses among them was to smelt copper. In many respects the state of Egypt at the close of this period was not greatly unlike that in which we know it to have been in the earliest part of the dynastic period. It was divided roughly into districts, or as we might say, counties, which at a later period were called "nomes" by the Greeks. Each district had its own symbol, which was generally that of its totem, and probably its own god, or gods, who must have been served by some kind of priest. The laws which men draw up for the protection of their wives, cattle, and possessions generally, as soon as they settle down in towns and villages, were, no doubt, administered in the rough and ready way that has been common among African communities from time immemorial. A system of irrigation must have been in use at this time, but it is improbable that there was any central controlling authority. The men of each district protected the part of the bank of the Nile that belonged to them, and made and maintained their own canals, and the high, banked causeways, which connected the towns and villages during the period of the Nile flood, and served as roads. There must have been a head man or governor in each district who possessed a good deal of power, and each town was probably ruled by a kind of mayor with due regard to the interests of the owners of large properties of different kinds. In the villages the largest landowners were probably supreme, but the "old men" or "fathers" of each village must have enjoyed a certain authority.

For a considerable time before the dynastic period there must have been kings in Egypt, some ruling over upper Egypt, and some over lower Egypt and the Delta. A portion of a monument, now called the "Palermo Stone" because it is preserved in the museum of Palermo in Sicily, supplies the names of several kings of lower Egypt, e.g., Seka, Tau, Thesh, Neheb, Uatchnâr, and Mekha.

It is quite certain that the names of several kings of upper Egypt were given on the missing portion of the monument, and this fact proves that at that time southern and northern Egypt formed two separate and independent kingdoms. When complete the Palermo stone contained a series of annals, which recorded the principal events in the reigns of the pre-dynastic kings, and also of the dynastic kings down to the middle of the fifth dynasty. There were also included the names of the principal festivals that were celebrated in these reigns, and also the height of the Nile flood yearly, given in cubits, palms, fingers, and spans. How these

heights were ascertained is not clear, but it was probably by means of lines cut into a rock on the river bank, or on a slab built into a wall of a well at Memphis. The height of the Nile flood then, as now, was valuable for determining the degree of prosperity of the country that was probable during the year.

We have already said that the native African element in upper Egypt was reinforced continually from the south, and we may assume that the process of reinforcement usually went on peacefully, and that the Egyptians in upper Egypt assimilated their newly-arrived kinsmen from the south without difficulty. This, however, was fated not to go on indefinitely, for on one occasion at least, probably a century or two before the dynastic period began, a host of men from the south or southeast swept down upon Egypt. This invasion in many respects seems to have been similar to that which took place under Piānkhi, the king of Nubia, whose capital was at Napt, or Napata, about 720 B.C.; but whilst Piānkhi returned to Nubia, the southern folk and their leaders who invaded Egypt towards the close of the pre-dynastic period did not do so. If we take into account the effect of this pre-dynastic invasion upon the civilization of Egypt we must assume that the invaders were more highly civilized than the people they conquered. And if we assume this we must further assume that the invaders came from the country now called Abyssinia and the lands to the south of it. Their route was the old trade route known today as the "Blue Nile caravan route," which has been chosen from time immemorial by the captains of caravans, because it makes it unnecessary to traverse the first four cataracts. Among the invaders who came by this route were natives of the Eastern Desert, the remote ancestors of the Blemmyes and the modern Hadenduwa and cognate tribes, and Semites, who had originally crossed the Red Sea from Asia to Africa. We have no distinct record of this invasion, still less have we any details of it, and we have no knowledge of the causes that led up to it; but in an inscription of the Ptolemaic period cut on the walls of the temple of Edfu in upper Egypt, we certainly have a legendary account of it. In this inscription the victorious leader is accompanied by men who are called "Mesniu," or "Blacksmiths," who came from the west of the Nile, i.e., from a country to the south of Egypt, and not from a country to the southeast. This view agrees quite well with what is known of the dynastic period, for the Pharaohs often had to fight hordes of enemies from countries so far south as the White Nile and the Gazelle and Jûr Rivers, and their descendants were probably to be found in the Nobadae, who terrified the Romans, and the "Baggârah" who fought under the Mahdi in our own times. There may have been a conquest of Egypt by the peoples to

the west of Egypt at one time, and another by the peoples to the east at another time, or the enemies of Egypt on both banks of the White and Blue Niles may have invaded the country together. In any case the purport of the inscription, the contents of which we will now describe, is to show that the king of the south and his descendants first conquered upper Egypt and then lower Egypt.

The Edfu text sets forth that Râ-Harmakhis was king of Ta-sti, the "Land of the Bow," i.e., the country of all the peoples who fought with bows and arrows, or the eastern Sûdân. In the 363d year of his reign he dispatched a force into Egypt, and overcoming all opposition, this god established himself and his followers at Edfû. Having discovered that the enemy had collected in force to the southeast of Thebes, Horus and his followers, or the blacksmiths, armed with spears and chains, set out and joined battle with them, and utterly defeated them at a place called Tchetmet. For the first time probably the natives armed with weapons made of flint found themselves in mortal combat with foreign enemies armed with metal weapons; their defeat was unavoidable. Soon after this battle the natives again collected in force to the northeast of Denderah, about fifty miles north of Thebes, where they were attacked and again defeated by Horus. Another battle took place a little later on at Heben, about one hundred and fifty miles south of Memphis, and Horus cut up many of his defeated foes and offered them to the gods. Horus then pursued the enemy into the Delta, and wherever he did battle with them he defeated them. In one place the arch-rebel Set appeared with his followers and fought against Horus and his "blacksmiths," but Horus drove his spear into Set's neck, fettered his limbs with his chain, and then cut off his head, and the heads of all his followers. Horus then sailed over the streams in the Delta, and slew the enemy in detail, and made himself master of the whole of the Delta, from the swamps on the west of the left main arm of the Nile to the desert in the east. The text goes on to say that companies of the "blacksmiths" settled down on lands given to them by Horus on the right and left banks of the Nile and in what is now called "middle Egypt"; thus the followers of Horus from the south effectively occupied the country. Horus returned to Edfû and made an expedition against the people of Uauat (now northern Nubia), and punished their rebellion. He then sailed back to Edfû and established the worship of Horus of Edfû, and ordered a symbol of this god to be placed in every temple of Egypt. Now the symbol referred to is the winged solar disk, with a serpent on each side of it, and the statement suggests that Horus established the worship of a form of the sun-god in Egypt. If this be really so, Horus and his followers must have come from the east, where

sun-worship was common, and must have found that the Egyptians were not sun-worshippers. The Egyptians, like most of the peoples in the Nile Valley, ancient and modern, only worshipped the sun under compulsion. On the other hand, the worship of the moon was universal, and the native gods of the Egyptians were of a kind quite different from those worshipped in the Eastern Desert and among the peoples of Arabia, Syria, and the northern Delta.

## BEGINNING OF DYNASTIC HISTORY

As the result, however, of one of the battles between the forces of the south and north, which was fought probably near Anulater Heliopolis--the king of the south gained the victory, and he was henceforth able to call himself "King of the South, King of the North." Who this mighty "uniter of the two lands" really was is not known, but the native tradition, which was current at Abydos, and presumably throughout Egypt, in the thirteenth century before Christ, stated that he was called *Mena*; this tradition was also accepted in the time of the Greek historians, for they all agree in saying that the first king of Egypt was called *Menes*.

## MANETHO--THE EGYPTIAN HISTORIAN ON THE DYNASTIES

In this history of Egypt, Manetho gave a list of the kings of Egypt, which he divided into three parts, each containing several groups of kings which he called "dynasties," but it is not quite clear what he meant by the word "dynasty." Though his history is lost, four copies of his king-list are preserved in the works of later writers. The oldest of these is that which is said to have been written by Julius Africanus, in the third century of our era, which is preserved in the "Chronicle of Eusebius," bishop of Caesarea, born A.D. 264, and died about 340. In this work Eusebius also gives a copy of the list of

## THE DYNASTIES OF ANCIENT EGYPT

*Dynasties*

*Duration in years*

### ANCIENT EMPIRE

1-2

Thinite

555

3-5	Memphite	746
6	Elephantine	203
7-8	Memphite	142 years, 70 days
9-10	Heracleopolite	294

## MIDDLE EMPIRE

11-13	Theban	666
<b>14</b>	Xoite	184
15-17	Hyksos (Delta)	511

## NEW EMPIRE

18-20	Theban	593
21	Tanite	130
22	Bubastite	170
23	Tanite	89
24	Saïte	6
25	Ethiopian	50
26	Saïte	138
27	Persian	121
28	Saïte	7
29	Mendesian	21



30	Sebennyte	38
31	Persian	8

PRINCIPAL KINGS

	<i>Dynasties</i>
Mena	1
Teta	
Hesepti	
Ba-en-neter	2
Sneferu	3
Khufu	4
Khafra	
Menkau-Ra	
Unas	5
Teta	6
Pepi I	
Pepi II	
Queen Nitocris	
Amen-em-hat I	12

Usertsen I	
Amen-em-hat II	
Usertsen II	
Usertsen III	
Amen-em-hat III	
Amen-em-hat IV	
Sekenen-Ra	17
Aahmes I	18
Amen-hotep I	
Thothmes II	
Queen Hatshepsu	
Thothmes III	
Amen-hotep II	
Thothmes IV	
Amen-hotep III	
Amen-hotep IV	
Akhnaton	
Semenkhkara--or Saakara	
Tutankhaton--after Tutankhamon	

Seti I	19
Ramses II	
Merenptah	
Ramses III	20
Her-Hor	21
Shashanq I (Shishak)	22
Osorkon II (Zerah?)	
Tefnekht (Piankhi King of Ethiopia took Memphis)	23
Bakenranef (Bocchoris)	
Shabaka. His sister Ameniritis married Piankhi II and their daughter became the queen of Psamethek I	25
Shabataka	
Taharaqa (Tirhakah)	26
Psamethe I	
Neku II (Necho)	
Uahabra (Hophra)	30
Nekthorheb (Nectanebo I)	
Nektnebef (Nectanebo II)	

Manetho made by himself, but the copy of Julius Africanus agrees better with the results derived from the monuments which we now have than that of Eusebius. The dynasties of Manetho's king-list that represent that "archaic period" are the first three. According to this, the kings of the first dynasty were eight in number and reigned 263 years; those of the second dynasty were nine in number and reigned 214 years. The first and second dynasties reigned at Thnis--Abydos--and the third dynasty at Memphis. The original Egyptian forms of many of the royal names given by Manetho have been identified without doubt; the identifications of a few others are nearly certain, and about the remainder there exist many different opinions. Besides Áha and Nârmer, or Nârmer and Áha, for the true order of these two kings is uncertain.

### THOTHMES III OF THE EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY

Thothmes III is generally regarded as the greatest of the kings of Egypt--the Alexander the Great of the Egyptian history. The name Thothmes means "child of Thoth," and was a common name among the ancient Egyptians. He is represented by a sphinx presenting gifts of water and wine to Tum, the setting sun, a solar deity worshipped at Heliopolis. On the hieroglyphic paintings at Karnak, the fact of the heliacal rising of Sothis, the dog-star, is stated to have taken place during this reign, from which it appears that Thothmes III occupied the throne of Egypt about 1450 B.C. This is one of the few dates of Egyptian chronology that can be authenticated.

Thothmes III belonged to the eighteenth dynasty, which included some of the greatest of Egyptian monarchs. Among the kings of this dynasty were four that bore the name of Thothmes, and four the name of Amenophis, which means "peace of Amen." The monarchs of this dynasty were Thebans.

The father of Thothmes III was a great warrior. He conquered the Canaanitish nations of Palestine, took Nineveh from the Rutennu, the confederate tribes of Syria, laid waste Mesopotamia, and introduced war chariots and horses into the army of Egypt.

Thothmes III, however, was even a greater warrior than his father; and during his long reign Egypt reached the climax of her greatness. His

predecessors of the eighteenth dynasty had extended the dominions of Egypt far into Asia and the interior of Africa. He was a king of great capacity and a warrior of considerable courage. The records of his campaigns are for the most part preserved on a sandstone wall surrounding the great temple of Karnak, built by Thothmes III in honor of Amen-Ra. From these hieroglyphic inscriptions it appears that Thothmes' first great campaign was made in the twenty-second year of his reign, when an expedition was made into the land of Taneter, that is, Palestine. A full account of his marches and victories is given, together with a list of one hundred and nineteen conquered towns.

This monarch lived before the time of Joshua, and therefore the records of his conquests present us with the ancient Canaanite nomenclature of places in Palestine between the times of the patriarchs and the conquest of the land by the Israelites under Joshua. Thothmes set out with his army from Tanis, that is Zoan; and after taking Gaza, he proceeded, by way of the plain of Sharon, to the more northern parts of Palestine. At the battle of Megiddo he overthrew the confederated troops of native princes; and in consequence of this signal victory the whole of Palestine was subdued. Crossing the Jordan near the Sea of Galilee, Thothmes pursued his march to Damascus, which he took by the sword; and then returning homeward by the Judean hills and the south country of Palestine, he returned to Egypt laden with the spoils of victory.

In the thirtieth year of his reign Thothmes led an expedition against the Rutennu, the people of northern Syria. In this campaign he attacked and captured Kadesh, a strong fortress in the valley of Orontes, and the capital town of the Rutennu. The king pushed his conquests into Mesopotamia, and occupied the strong fortress of Carchemish, on the banks of the Euphrates. He then led his conquering troops northward to the sources of the Tigris and the Euphrates, so that the kings of Damascus, Nineveh, and Assur became his vassals, and paid tribute to Egypt.

Punt or Arabia was also subdued, and in Africa his conquests extended to Cush or Ethiopia. His fleet of ships sailed triumphantly over the waters of the Black Sea. Thus Thothmes ruled over lands extending from the mountains of Caucasus to the shores of the Indian Ocean, and from the Libyan Desert to the great river Tigris.

Besides distinguishing himself as a warrior and as a record writer, Thothmes III was one of the greatest of Egyptian builders and patrons

of art. The great temple of Ammon at Thebes was the special object of his fostering care, and he began his career of builder and restorer by repairing the damages which his sister Hatasu had inflicted on that glorious edifice to gratify her dislike of her brother Thothmes III, and her father Thothmes I. Statues of Thothmes I and his father Amenophis, which Hatasu had thrown down, were re-erected by Thothmes III, before the southern propylæa of the temple in the first year of his independent reign. The central sanctuary which Usertesen I had built in common stone, was next replaced by the present granite edifice, under the directions of the young prince, who then proceeded to build in the rear of the old temple a magnificent hall or pillared chamber of dimensions previously unknown in Egypt. This edifice was an oblong square, one hundred and forty-three feet long by fifty-five feet wide, or nearly half as large again as our largest cathedral. The whole of this apartment was roofed in with slabs of solid stone; two rows of circular pillars thirty feet in height supported the central part, dividing it into three avenues, while on each side of the pillars was a row of square piers, still further extending the width of the chamber and breaking it up into five long vistas. In connection with this noble hall, on three sides of it, north, east, and south, Thothmes erected further chambers and corridors, one of the former situated towards the south containing the "Great Table of Karnak."

One of the most interesting Pharaohs of Egypt was Akhnaton, who is called the first individualist of history and a great idealist. Prof. Wallis Budge gives this account of his kingship:

"Amen-Hetep--Akhnaton--was the son of Amen-hetep III by his wife Ti, and he reigned about twenty years. Whether he ascended the throne immediately after his father's death is not known, but whether he did or not matters little, for it is quite certain that for some years at least his mother was the actual ruler of Egypt, and that she ordered works to be carried out as if she were its lawful sovereign. His wife Nefertithi, who was probably of Asiatic origin like his mother, also obtained a power and an authority in Egypt which were not usually enjoyed by Egyptian queens. These facts are proved by the monuments, in which both Ti and Nefertithi are represented as equals in every respect of Amen-hetep IV, and their names are accorded prominence similar to those of the king. The pictures and sculptured representations of Amen-hetep IV show that his physical characteristics were wholly of a non-Egyptian character, and suggest that he was of a highly nervous and sensitive disposition, lacking in purpose, firmness, and decision, full of prejudices, self-will, and obstinacy. His acts prove that he was

unpractical in every matter connected with the rule of Egypt and her Nubian and Asiatic provinces, which had been won for her by the great Thothmes III, and the story of the break-up of the great Egyptian empire owing to his weakness and incapacity is almost the saddest page of Egyptian history. His alien blood, derived from his mother and grandmother, caused to develop in him a multitude of strange ideas about religion, art, and government that were detestable to the Egyptians, whose national characteristics he neither recognized nor understood, and with whom he had no true sympathy. When he ascended the throne he adopted a series of names that proclaimed to all Egypt that he held religious views of a different character from those held by the majority of the Egyptians. Some of these resembled the doctrines of the Sun-god as taught by the priests of Heliopolis, but others were obnoxious to the Egyptians generally. His father and grandfather probably held exactly the same religious views, but if they did they took care not to allow them to disturb the peace of the country, nor to interrupt the business of the state. Amen-hetep IV proclaimed a new form of worship, and, to all intents and purposes, a new god, whom he called Aten. Now Aten was well known to the Egyptians as the god of the solar disk, and they had been familiar with him from the earliest period; but Amen-hetep IV assigned to him new attributes, which are very difficult to describe. He taught that Aten was the unseen, almighty, and everlasting power that made itself manifest in the form of the solar disk in the sky, and was the source of all life in heaven and earth and the underworld. He ascribed to Aten a monotheistic character, or oneness, which he denied to every other god, but when we read the hymns to Aten of which the king approved, it is extremely difficult to understand the difference between the oneness of Aten and the oneness of Amen-Râ, or Râ, or of any other great Egyptian god.

"During the first four years of his reign Amen-hetep IV lived at Thebes, but during the whole of this period he was quarrelling actively with the priests of Amen-Râ, whose god Amen was an abomination to him. As king he had great resources at his command, and besides building a sanctuary called Kem Aten at Thebes, he set up shrines to Aten at various places in Egypt, and also in the Sudan. The most important in the latter country was Kem Aten, which was probably situated at or near Sadengah, where his father had built a temple in honor of Queen Ti. Whilst this work was going on Amen-hetep IV caused the name of Amen to be hammered out from the inscriptions on existing monuments, and he suppressed by every means in his power the cults of the other gods. Such an intolerant religious fanatic was never before seen in Egypt, and the king hated Amen and his name so thoroughly

that he changed his own name from Amen-hetep to "Khu-en-Aten," or "Aakh-en-Aten," a name meaning "spirit soul of Aten." Besides his fanaticism there was also a material reason for his hatred of Amen. He saw the greater part of the revenues of the country being absorbed slowly but surely by the greedy priesthood of this god, and he felt that their wealth made their power to be actually greater than that of the king.

"Of the details of the fight between the priesthoods of the old gods of Egypt and the king little is known, but it is clear that the Egyptians found some effective way of showing their resentment to the king, for in the fifth year of his reign he forsook Thebes, and founded a new capital, wherein Aten alone was to be worshipped. The site of the new capital which was called Khut-en-Aten, or 'horizon of Aten,' was on the east bank of the Nile, about two hundred miles south of Memphis, and is marked today by the villages of Haggi Kandil, and Tell al-Amarnah. Here he built a large temple to Aten and two or three smaller sanctuaries for the private use of the ladies of his family. Near the temple was the palace, which was splendidly decorated and furnished with beautiful objects of every kind, and the priests and high officials and nobles who had followed the king were provided with rock-hewn tombs in the mountain behind the new capital. A considerable space of ground about this capital was set apart as the property of Aten, and its confines were marked with boundary stones, and the revenues of some of the old sanctuaries were wrested from them by the king and applied to the support of Aten. Amen-hetep IV and his followers lived in Khut-en-Aten for some twelve or fifteen years in comparative peace, and the king occupied himself in playing the priest, and in superintending the building operations and the laying out of large and beautiful gardens by the court architect Bek. The high priest bore the title of the high priest of Heliopolis, and the form of worship there seems to have had much in common with the old solar cult of Heliopolis. The king composed one or two hymns which were sung in his temple, and copies of these were painted on the walls of the tombs of his favourites.

"Meanwhile what was happening to Egypt and her Asiatic and Nubian provinces? For a time the kings of Mitanni and Babylonia sent dispatches to Amen-hetep IV as they did to his father, and some of the chiefs of the neighboring countries sent tribute to him as they did to his father. When, however, the envoys returned to their countries and reported that Pharaoh, whose mere name had struck terror into the Asiatics, was at enmity with all his people, and was devoting all his time to theological matters, and to the founding of new canons of art,



and to the selfish enjoyment of a religion that was detested by all the Egyptian priesthoods, with the exception of the priesthood of Heliopolis, the enemies of the Egyptian power in western Asia felt that the time of their deliverance was at hand. With one accord they ceased to pay tribute, and gathering together their forces, they attacked the Egyptian garrisons in Syria and Palestine, and one by one the cities fell, and the Egyptian governors and their troops were slain or scattered. The Kheta, or Hittites, swept down from the north upon the possessions of Egypt, and being joined by the Khabiri and by the vassal princes of Egypt, were irresistible. They first attacked and took the inland cities, and then advancing westward they captured city after city along the coast until Beyrut, Tyre, Ascalon, Gezer, and Lachish were at their mercy. The Tell al-Amarnah letters contain piteous appeals to Amen-hotep IV for help from all parts of Syria and Palestine, and every writer entreats the king to protect his own possessions; but the king had no help to send, and even if he had had troops available for despatch they would never have been sent, for he hated war in all its forms. Thus Egypt lost her Asiatic possessions which it had taken her kings nearly two hundred years to acquire. Meanwhile discontent was growing everywhere in Egypt itself, and conspiracies against the king were spreading in all directions; when these had reached formidable proportions the king died, but whether his death was due to anxiety, disease, or poison cannot be said. Amen-hotep IV had no son, and his family consisted of six daughters, the eldest of whom died before her father. He was buried in a tomb hewn in the mountains behind his town, and his stone coffin, or sarcophagus, was found there in 1893 by the native tomb robbers, who cut out the cartouches from it and sold them to travellers.

"Amen-hotep IV was succeeded by *Sâakarâ* who had married one of his daughters called Merit-Aten, and had probably assisted his father-in-law in his various religious undertakings. *Sâakarâ* ruled the town of Khut-en-Aten for two or three years, and was succeeded by Tut-Ânkh-Amen, a son of Amen-hotep III, who married a daughter of Amen-hotep IV called Ânkhsempaaten. Tut-ânkh-Amen was undoubtedly supported by the priests of Amen, as the presence of the name of the god in his name testifies, and his accession to the throne marks the triumph of the priesthood of Amen over Aten and his followers. He made his wife change her name to Ankhsempaaten, and removed the court to Thebes, where he at once set to work to repair portions of the great temples of Amen at Karnak and Luxor. Wherever it was possible to do so he restored the name and figure of the god Amen, which his father-in-law had attempted to obliterate. He carried out certain building operations

in the Sudan and received tribute from the chiefs of the country, but he undertook no military expeditions into Syria, and made no attempt to renew the sovereignty of Egypt in western Asia. When Tut-Ankh-Amen removed his court to Thebes, he was quickly followed by many of the nobles who had settled at Khut-en-Aten, and the capital of Amen-hetep IV began at once to decline. The services in the temple languished, and the sculptors and artists who had designed their works in accordance with the canons of art devised and approved by Amen-hetep IV found themselves without employment; the working classes who had lived on the court left the town, which in a very few years became forsaken. The Aten temples were thrown down, and before many years had passed the town became a heap of ruins. Thus the triumph of Amen, the god who had delivered the Egyptians from the Nyksos, was complete."

## **RAMESES II OF THE NINETEENTH DYNASTY**

Rameses II, called the Napoleon of Egypt, lived about two centuries after Thothmes III, and ascended the throne about 1300 B.C. Rameses I was the third king of the nineteenth dynasty; and for personal exploits, the magnificence of his works, and the length of his reign, he was not surpassed by any of the kings of ancient Egypt, except by Thothmes III.

His grandfather, Rameses I, was the founder of the dynasty. His father, Seti I, is celebrated for his victories over the Rutennu, or Syrians, and over the Shasu, or Arabians, as well as for his public works, especially the great temple he built at Karnak. Rameses II, was, however, a greater warrior than his father. He first conquered Kush, or Ethiopia; then he led an expedition against the Khitæ, or Hittites, whom he completely routed at Kadesh, the ancient capital, a town on the River Orontes, north of Mount Lebanon. In this battle Rameses was placed in the greatest danger; but his personal bravery stood him in good stead, and he kept the Hittites at bay till his soldiers rescued him. He thus commemorates on the monuments his deeds:

"I became like the god Mentu; I hurled the dart with my right hand; I fought with my left hand; I was like Baal in his time before their slight; I had come upon two thousand five hundred pairs of horses; I was in the midst of them; but they were dashed in pieces before my steeds. Not one of them raised his hand to fight; their courage was sunken in their breasts; their limbs gave way; they could not hurl the dart, nor had they strength to thrust the spear. I made them fall into the waters like crocodiles; they tumbled down on their faces one after another. I killed

them at my pleasure, so that not one looked back behind him; nor did any turn

round. Each fell, and none raised himself up again."

Rameses fought with and conquered the Amorites, Canaanites, and other tribes of Palestine and Syria. His public works are also very numerous; he dug wells, founded cities, and completed a great wall begun by his father Seti, reaching from Pelusium to Heliopolis, a gigantic structure designed to keep back the hostile Asiatics, thus reminding one of the Great Wall of China. Pelusium was situated near the present Port Said, and the wall must therefore have been about a hundred miles long. In its course it must have passed near the site of Tel-el-Kebir. It is now certain that Rameses built the treasure cities spoken of in Exodus: "Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses"--Exod. i. 11. According to Dr. Brich, Rameses II was a monarch of whom it was written: "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph."

He enlarged On and Tanis, and built temples at Ipsambul, Karnak, Luxor, Abydos, Memphis, etc.

The most remarkable of the temples erected by Rameses is the building at Thebes, once called the Memnonium, but now commonly known as the Rameseum; and the extraordinary rock temple of Ipsambul, or Abu-Simbel, the most magnificent specimen of its class which the world contains.

The façade is formed by four huge colossi, each seventy feet in height, representing Rameses himself seated on a throne, with the double crown of Egypt upon his head. In the center, flanked on either side by two of these gigantic figures, is a doorway of the usual Egyptian type, opening into a small vestibule, which communicates by a short passage with the main chamber. This is an oblong square, sixty feet long, by forty-five, divided into a nave and two aisles by two rows of square piers with Osirid statues, thirty feet high in front, and ornamented with painted sculptures over its whole surface. The main chamber leads into an inner shrine or adytum, supported by four piers with Osirid figures, but otherwise as richly adorned as the outer apartment. Behind the adytum are small rooms for the priests who served in the temple. It is the façade of the work which constitutes its main beauty.

"The largest of the rock temples at Ipsambul," says Mr. Fergusson, "*is the finest of its class known to exist anywhere*. Externally the façade is about one hundred feet in height, and adorned by four of the most magnificent colossi in Egypt, each seventy feet in height, and representing the king, Rameses II, who caused the excavation to be made."

His character has been well summarized by Canon Rawlinson: "His affection for his son, and for his two principal wives, shows that the disposition of Rameses II was in some respects amiable; although, upon the whole, his character is one which scarcely commends itself to our approval. Professing in his early years extreme devotion to the memory of his father, he lived to show himself his father's worst enemy, and to aim at obliterating his memory by erasing his name from the monuments on which it occurred, and in many cases substituting his own. Amid a great show of regard for the deities of his country, and for the ordinances of the established worship, he contrived that the chief result of all that he did for religion should be the glorification of himself. Other kings had arrogated to themselves a certain qualified dignity, and after their deaths had sometimes been placed by some of their successors on a par with the real national gods; but it remained for Rameses to associate himself during his lifetime with such leading deities as Ptah, Ammon, and Horus, and to claim equally with them the religious regards of his subjects. He was also, as already observed, the first to introduce into Egypt the degrading custom of polygamy and the corrupting influence of a harem. Even his bravery, which cannot be denied, loses half its merit by being made the constant subject of boasting; and his magnificence ceases to appear admirable when we think at what a cost it displayed itself. If, with most recent writers upon Egyptian history, we identify him with the 'king who knew not Joseph,' the builder of Pithom and Raameses, the first oppressor of the Israelites, we must add some darker shades to the picture, and look upon him as a cruel and ruthless despot, who did not shrink from inflicting on innocent persons the severest pain and suffering."

## CHAPTER II

### RELIGION OF ANCIENT EGYPT

#### EGYPTIAN VIEW OF CREATION

MAN in all times and places, has speculated on the nature and origin of the world, and connected such questions with his theology. In Egypt there are not many primitive theories of creation, though some have various elaborated forms. Of the formation of the earth there were two views.

(1) That it had been brought into being by the word of a god, who when he uttered any name caused the object thereby to exist. Thoth is the principal creator by this means and this idea probably belongs to a period soon after the age of the animal gods.

(2) The other view is that Ptah framed the world as an artificer, with the aid of eight *Khnumu*, or earth-gnomes. This belongs to the theology of the abstract gods. The primitive people seem to have been content with the eternity of matter, and only personified nature when they described space, Shu, as separating the sky, Nut, from the earth, Seb. This is akin to the separation of chaos into sky and sea in Genesis.

The sun is called the egg laid by the primeval goose; and in later time this was said to be laid by a god, or modelled by Ptah. Evidently this goose egg is a primitive tale which was adapted to later theology.

The sky is said to be upheld by four pillars. These were later connected with the gods of the four quarters; but the primitive four pillars were represented together, with the capitals one over the other, in the sign *dad*, the emblem of stability. These may have belonged to the Osiris cycle, as he is "lord of the pillars," *daddu*, and his center in the Delta was named Daddu from the pillars. The setting up of the pillars or *dad* emblem was a great festival in which the kings took part, and which is often represented.

The creation of life was variously attributed to different great gods where they were worshipped. Khnumu, Osiris, Amen, or Atmu, each are stated to be the creator. The mode was only defined by the theorists of Heliopolis; they imagined that Atmu self-produced Seb and Nut, and they in turn other gods, from whom at last sprang mankind.

But this is merely later theorizing to fit a theology in being.

The cosmogonic theories, therefore, were by no means important articles of belief, but rather assumptions of what the gods were likely to

have done similar to the acts of men. The creation by the word is the more elevated idea, and is parallel to the creation in Genesis.

The conception of the nature of the world was that of a great plain, over which the sun passed by day, and beneath which it travelled through the hours of night. The movement of the sun was supposed to be that of floating on the heavenly ocean, figured by its being in a boat, which was probably an expression for its flotation. The elaboration of the nature of the regions through which the sun passed at night essentially belongs to the Ra theology, and only recognises the kingdom of Osiris by placing it in one of the hours of night. The old conception of the dim realm of the cemetery-god Seker occupies the fourth and fifth hours; the sixth hour is an approach to the Osiride region, and the seventh hour is the kingdom of Osiris. Each hour was separated by gates, which were guarded by demons who needed to be controlled by magic formulæ.

## THE GODS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

Before dealing with the special varieties of the Egyptians' belief in gods, it is best to try to avoid a misunderstanding of their whole conception of *the supernatural*. The term god has come to tacitly imply to our minds such a highly specialized group of attributes that we can hardly throw our ideas back into the more remote conceptions to which we also attach the same name. It is unfortunate that every other word for supernatural intelligences has become debased, so that we cannot well speak of demons, devils, ghosts, or fairies without implying a noxious or a trifling meaning, quite unsuited to the ancient deities that were so beneficent and powerful. If then we use the word god for such conceptions, it must always be with the reservation that the word has now a very different meaning from what it had to ancient minds.

To the Egyptian the gods might be mortal; even Ra, the sun-god, is said to have grown old and feeble, Osiris was slain, and Orion, the great hunter of the heavens, killed and ate the gods. The mortality of gods has been dwelt on by Dr. Frazer in the "Golden Bough," and the many instances of tombs of gods, and of the slaying of the deified man who was worshipped, all show that immortality was not a divine attribute. Nor was there any doubt that they might suffer while alive; one myth tells how Ra, as he walked on earth, was bitten by a magic serpent and suffered torments. *The gods were also supposed to share in a life like that of man, not only in Egypt but in most ancient lands.* Offerings of food and drink were constantly supplied to them, in Egypt laid upon the altars, in

other lands burnt for a sweet savour. At Thebes the divine wife of the god, or high priestess, was the head of the harem of concubines of the god; and similarly in Babylonia the chamber of the god with the golden couch could only be visited by the priestess who slept there for oracular responses. The Egyptian gods could not be cognisant of what passed on earth without being informed, nor could they reveal their will at a distant place except by sending a messenger; they were as limited as the Greek gods who required the aid of Iris to communicate one with another or with mankind. The gods, therefore, have no divine superiority to man in conditions or limitations; they can only be described as pre-existent, acting intelligences, with scarcely greater powers than man might hope to gain by magic or witchcraft of his own. This conception explains how easily the divine merged into the human in Greek theology, and how frequently divine ancestors occurred in family histories. (By the word "theology" is designated the knowledge about gods.)

*There are in ancient theologies very different classes of gods.* Some races, as the modern Hindu, revel in a profusion of gods and godlings, which are continually being increased. Others, as the Turanians, whether Sumerian Babylonians, modern Siberians, or Chinese, do not adopt the worship of great gods, but deal with a host of animistic spirits, ghosts, devils, or whatever we may call them; and Shamanism or witchcraft is their system for conciliating such adversaries. But all our knowledge of the early positions and nature of great gods shows them to have stood on an entirely different footing to these varied spirits. Were the conception of a god only an evolution from such spirit worship of one god, polytheism would precede monotheism in each tribe or race. What we actually find is the contrary of this, monotheism is the first stage traceable in theology. Hence we must rather look on the theologic conception of the Aryan and Semitic races as quite apart from the demon-worship of the Turanians. Indeed the Chinese seem to have a mental aversion to the conception of a personal god, and to think either of the host of earth spirits and other demons, or else of the pantheistic abstraction of heaven.

*Wherever we can trace back polytheism to its earliest stages we find that it results from combinations of monotheism.* In Egypt even Osiris, Isis, and Horus--so familiar as a triad--are found at first as separate units in different places, Isis as a virgin goddess, and Horus as a self-existent god. Each city appears to have but one god belonging to it, to whom others were added. Similarly in Babylonia each great city had its supreme god; and the combinations of these, and their transformations

in order to form them in groups when their homes were politically united, show how essentially they were solitary deities at first.

Not only must we widely distinguish the demonology of races worshipping numerous earth spirits and demons from the theology of races devoted to solitary great gods; but we must further distinguish the varying ideas of the latter class. *Most of the theologic races have no objection to tolerating the worship of other gods side by side with that of their own local deity.* It is in this way that the compound theologies built up the polytheism of Egypt and of Greece. But others of the theologic races have the conception of "a jealous god," who would not tolerate the presence of a rival. We cannot date this conception earlier than Mosaism, and this idea struggled hard against polytheistic toleration. This view acknowledges the reality of other gods, but ignores their claims. The still later view was that other gods were non-existent, a position started by the Hebrew prophets in contempt of idolatry, scarcely grasped by early Christianity, but triumphantly held by Islam.

We therefore have to deal with the following conceptions, which fall into two main groups, that probably belong to different divisions of mankind:

Animism	At any state the unity of different gods may be accepted as a <i>modus vivendi</i> or as a philosophy.
Demonology	
Tribal Monotheism	
Combinations forming tolerant Polytheism	
Jealous Monotheism	
Sole Monotheism	



All of these require mention here as more or less of each principle, both of animism and monotheism, can be traced in the innumerable combinations found during the six thousand years of Egyptian religion: these combinations of beliefs being due to combinations of the races to which they belonged.

Before we can understand what were the relations between man and the gods we must first *notice the conceptions of the nature of man*. In the prehistoric days of Egypt the position and direction of the body was always the same in every burial; offerings of food and drink were placed by it, figures of servants, furniture, even games, were included in the grave. It must be concluded therefore that it was a belief in immortality which gave rise to such a detailed ritual of the dead, though we have no written evidence upon this.

So soon as we reach the age of documents we find on tombstones that the person is denoted by the *khu* between the arms of the *ka*. From later writings it is seen that the *khu* is applied to a spirit of man; while the *ka* is not the body but the activities of sense and perception. Thus, in the earliest age of documents, two entities were believed to vitalize the body.

*The KA is more frequently named than any other part, as all funeral offerings were made for the KA. It is said that if opportunities of satisfaction in life were missed it is grievous to the ka, and that the ka must not be annoyed needlessly; hence it was more than perception, and it included all that we might call consciousness. Perhaps we may grasp it best as the "self," with the same variety of meaning that we have in our own word. The ka was represented as a human being following after the man; it was born at the same time as the man, but persisted after death and lived in and about the tomb. It could act and visit other kas after death, but it could not resist the least touch of physical force. It was always represented by two upraised arms, the acting parts of the person. Beside the ka of man, all objects likewise had their kas, which were comparable to the human ka, and among these the ka lived. This view leads closely to the world of ideas permeating the material world in later philosophy.*

*The KHU is figured as a crested bird, which has the meaning of "glorious" or "shining" in ordinary use. It refers to a less material conception than the ka, and may be called the intelligence or spirit.*

*The KHAT is the material body of man which was the vehicle of the KA, and inhabited by the KHU.*

The BA belongs to, a different pneumatology to that just noticed. It is the soul apart from the body, figured as a human-headed bird. The conception probably arose from the white owls, with round beads and every human expressions, which frequent the tombs, flying noiselessly to and fro. The *ba* required food and drink, which were provided for it by the goddess of the cemetery. It thus overlaps the scope of the *ka*, and probably belongs to a different race to that which define the man.

The *sahu* or mummy is associated particularly with the *ba*; and the *ba* bird is often shown as resting on the mummy or seeking to re-enter it.

The *khaybet* was the shadow of a man; the importance of the shadow in early ideas is well known.

The *sekhem* was the force or ruling power of man, but is rarely mentioned.

The *ab* is the will and intentions, symbolised by the heart; often used in phrases such as a man being "in the heart of his lord," "wideness of heart" for satisfaction, "washing of the heart" for giving vent to temper.

*The HATI is the physical heart, the "chief" organ of the body, also wed metaphorically.*

The *ran* is the name which was essential to man, as also to inanimate things. Without a name nothing really existed. The knowledge. of the name gave power over its owner; a great myth turns on Isis obtaining the name of Ra by stratagem, and thus getting the two eyes of Ra--the sun and moon--for her son Horus. Both in ancient and modern races the knowledge of the real name of a man is carefully guarded, and often secondary names are used for secular purposes. It was usual for Egyptians to have a "great name" and a "little name"; the great name is often compounded with that of a god or a king, and was very probably reserved for religious purposes, as it is only found on religious and funerary monuments.

*We must not suppose by any means that all of these parts of the person were equally important, or were believed in simultaneously. The ka, khu, and khat*

seem to form one group; the *ba* and *sehu* belong to another; the *ab*, *hati*, and *sekhem* are hardly more than metaphors, such as we commonly use; the *khaybet* is a later idea which probably belongs to the system of animism and witchcraft, where the shadow gave a hold upon the man. The *ran*, name, belongs partly to the same system, but also is the germ of the later philosophy of idea.

The purpose of religion to the Egyptian was to secure the favor of the god. There is but little trace of negative prayer to avert evils or deprecate evil influences, but rather of positive prayer for concrete favors. On the part of kings this is usually of the Jacob type, offering to provide temples and services to the god in return for material prosperity. The Egyptian was essentially self-satisfied, he had no confession to make of sin or wrong, and had no thought of pardon. In the judgment he boldly averred that he was free of the forty-two sins that might prevent his entry into the kingdom of Osiris. If he failed to establish his innocence in the weighing of his heart, there was no other plea, but he was consumed by fire and by a hippopotamus, and no hope remained for him.

## THE EGYPTIAN VIEW OF FUTURE LIFE

*The various beliefs of the Egyptians regarding the future life are so distinct from each other and so incompatible, that they may be classified into groups more readily than the theology; thus they serve to indicate the varied sources of the religion.*

The most simple form of belief was that of the continued existence of the soul in the tomb and about the cemetery. In upper Egypt at present a hole is left at the top of the tomb chamber; and I have seen a woman remove the covering of the hole, and talk down to her deceased husband. Also funeral offerings of food and drink, and even beds, are still placed in the tombs. A similar feeling, without any precise beliefs, doubtless prompted the earlier forms of provision for the dead. The soul wandered around the tomb seeking sustenance, and was fed by the goddess who dwelt in the thick sycamore trees that overshadowed the cemetery. She is represented as pouring out drink for the *ba* and holding a tray of cakes for it to feed upon. In the grave we find this belief shown by the jars of water, wine, and perhaps other liquids, the stores of corn, the geese, haunches and heads of oxen, the cakes, and dates, and pomegranates which were laid by the dead. In an early king's tomb there might be many rooms full of these offerings. There were also the

weapons for defence and for the chase, the toilet objects, the stores of clothing, the draughtsmen, and even the literature of papyri buried with the dead. The later form of this system was the representation of all these offerings in sculpture and drawing in the tomb. This modification probably belongs to the belief in the *ka*, which could be supported by the *ka* of the food and use the *ka* of the various objects, the figures of the objects being supposed to provide the *kas* of them. This system is entirely complete in itself, and does not presuppose or require any theologic connection. It might well belong to an age of simple animism, and be a survival of that in later times.

The greatest theologic system was that of the kingdom of Osiris. This was a counterpart of the earthly life, but was reserved for the worthy. All the dead belonged to Osiris and were brought before him for judgment. The protest of being innocent of the forty-two sins was made, and then the heart was weighed against truth, symbolised by the ostrich feather, the emblem of the goddess of truth. From this feather, the emblem of lightness, being placed against the heart in weighing, it seems that sins were considered to weigh down the heart, and its lightness required to be proved. Thoth, the god who recorded the weighing, then stated that the soul left the judgment hall true of voice with his heart and members restored to him, and that he should follow Osiris in his kingdom. This kingdom of Osiris was at first thought of as being in the marsh lands of the Delta; when these became familiar it was transferred to Syria, and finally to the northeast of the sky, where the milky way became the heavenly Nile. The main occupation in this kingdom was agriculture, as on earth; the souls ploughed the land, sowed the corn, and reaped the harvest of heavenly maize, taller and fatter than any of this world. In this land they rowed on the heavenly streams, they sat in shady arbors, and played the games which they had loved. But the cultivation was a toil, and therefore it was to be done by numerous serfs. In the beginning of the monarchy it seems that the servants of the king were all buried around him to serve him in the future; from the second to the twelfth dynasty we lose sight of this idea, and then we find slave figures buried in the tombs. These figures were provided with the hoe for tilling the soil, the pick for breaking the clods, a basket for carrying the earth, a pot for watering the crops, and they were inscribed with an order to respond for their master when he was called on to work in the fields. In the eighteenth dynasty the figures sometimes have actual tool models buried with them; but usually the tools are in relief or painted on the figure. This idea continued until the less material view of the future life arose in Greek times; then the deceased man was said to have "gone to Osiris" in such a year of his

age, but no slave figures were laid with him. This view of the future is complete in itself, and is appropriately provided for in the tomb.

A third view of the future life belongs to an entirely different theologic system, that of the progress of the sun-god Ra. According to this the soul went to join the setting sun in the west, and prayed to be allowed to enter the boat of the sun in the company of the gods; thus it would be taken along in everlasting light, and saved from the terrors and demons of the night over which the sun triumphed. No occupations were predicated of this future; simply to rest in the divine company was the entire purpose, and the successful repelling of the powers of darkness in each hour of the night by means of spells was the only activity. To provide for the solar journey a model boat was placed in the tomb with the figures of boatmen, to enable the dead to sail with the sun, or to reach the solar bark. This view of the future implied a journey to the west, and hence came the belief in the soul setting out to cross the desert westward. We find also an early god of the dead, Khent-amenti, "he who is in the west," probably arising from this same view. This god was later identified with Osiris when the fusion of the two theories of the soul arose. At Abydos Khent-amenti only is named at first, and Osiris does not appear until later times, though that cemetery came to be regarded as specially dedicated to Osiris.

*Now in all these views that we have named there is no occasion for preserving the body. It is the Ba that is fed in the cemetery not the body. It is an immaterial body that takes part in the kingdom of Osiris, in the sky. It is an immaterial body that can accompany the gods in the boat of the sun. There is so far no call to conserve the body by the peculiar mummification which first appears in the early dynasties. The dismemberment of the bones, and removal of the flesh, which was customary in the prehistoric times, and survived down to the fifth dynasty, would accord with any of these theories, all of which were probably pre-dynastic. But the careful mummifying of the body became customary only in the third or fourth dynasty, and is therefore later than the theories that we have noticed. The idea of thus preserving the body seems to look forward to some later revival of it on earth, rather than to a personal life immediately after death. The funeral accompaniment of this view was the abundance of amulets placed on various parts of the body to preserve it. A few amulets are found worn on a necklace or bracelet in early times; but the full development of the amulet system was in the twenty-sixth to thirtieth dynasties.*

We have tried to disentangle the diverse types of belief, by seeing what is incompatible between them. But in practice we find every form of mixture of these views in most ages. In the prehistoric times the preservation of the bones, but not of the flesh, was constant; and food offerings show that at least the theory of the soul wandering in the cemetery was familiar. Probably the Osiris theory is also of the later prehistoric times, as the myth of Osiris is certainly older than the dynasties. The Ra worship was associated specially with Heliopolis, and may have given rise to the union with Ra also before the dynasties, when Heliopolis was probably a capital of the kings of lower Egypt. The boats figured on the prehistoric tomb at Hierakonpolis bear this out. In the first dynasty there is no mummy known, funeral offerings abound, and the *khu* and *ka* are named. Our documents do not give any evidence, then, of the Osiris and Ra theories. In the pyramid period the king was called the Osiris, and this view is the leading one in the pyramid inscriptions, yet the Ra theory is also incompatibly present; the body is mummified; but funeral offerings of food seem to have much diminished. In the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties the Ra theory gained ground greatly over the Osirian; and the basis of all the views of the future is almost entirely the union with Ra during the night and day. The mummy and amulet theory was not dominant; but the funeral offerings somewhat increased. The twenty-sixth dynasty almost dropped the Ra theory; the Osirian kingdom and its population of slave figures is the most familiar view, and the preservation of the body by amulets was essential. Offerings of food rarely appear in these later times. This dominance of Osiris leads on to the anthropomorphic worship, which interacts on the growth of Christianity as we shall see further. Lastly, when all the theologic views of the future had perished, the oldest idea of all, food, drink, and rest for the dead, has still kept its hold upon the feelings of the people in spite of the teachings of Islam.

## THE WORSHIP OF ANIMALS IN ANCIENT EGYPT

The worship of animals has been known in many countries; but in Egypt it was maintained to a later pitch of civilization than elsewhere, and the mixture of such a primitive system with more elevated beliefs seemed as strange to the Greek as it does to us. The original motive was a kinship of animals with man, much like that underlying the system of totems. Each place or tribe had its sacred species that was linked with the tribe; the life of the species was carefully preserved, excepting in the one example selected for worship, which after a given time was killed and sacramentally eaten by the tribe. This was certainly the case with the bull at Memphis and the ram at Thebes. That it was the whole

species that was sacred, at one place or another, is shown by the penalties for killing any animal of the species, by the wholesale burial and even mummifying of every example, and by the plural form of the names of the gods later connected with the animals, *Heru*, hawks, *Khnumu*, rams, etc.

In the prehistoric times the serpent was sacred; figures of the coiled serpent were hung up in the house and worn as an amulet; similarly in historic times a figure of the agathodemon serpent was placed in a temple of Amen-hotep III at Benha. In the first dynasty the serpent was figured in pottery, as a fender around the hearth. The hawk also appears in many pre-dynastic figures, large and small, both worn on the person and carried as standards. The lion is found both in life-size temple figures, lesser objects of worship, and personal amulets. The scorpion was similarly honored in the prehistoric ages.

*It is difficult to separate now between animals which were worshipped quite independently, and those which were associated as emblems of anthropomorphic gods.* Probably we shall be right in regarding both classes of animals as having been sacred at a remote time, and the connection with the human form as being subsequent. The ideas connected with the animals were those of their most prominent characteristics; hence it appears that it was for the sake of the character that each animal was worshipped, and not because of any fortuitous association with a tribe.

The baboon was regarded as the emblem of Tahuti, the god of wisdom; the serious expression and human ways of the large baboons are an obvious cause for their being regarded as the wisest of animals. Tahuti is represented as a baboon from the first dynasty down to late times, and four baboons were sacred in his temple at Himmopolis. These four baboons were often portrayed as adoring the sun; this idea is due to their habit of chattering at sunrise.

The lioness appears in the compound figures of the goddesses Sekhet, Bast, Mahes, and Tefnut. In the form of Sekhet the lioness is the destructive power of Ra, the sun: it is Sekhet who, in the legend, destroys mankind from Herakleopolis to Heliopolis at the bidding of Ra. The other lioness goddesses are probably likewise destructive or hunting deities. The lesser *felidæ* also appear; the *cheetah* and *serval* are sacred to Hathor in Sinai; the small cats are sacred to Bast, especially at Speos Artemidos and Bubastis.

*The bull was sacred in many places, and his worship underlay that of the human gods, who were said to be incarnated in him.* The idea is that of the fighting power, as when the king is figured as a bull trampling on his enemies, and the reproductive power, as in the title of the self-renewing gods, "bull of his mother." The most renowned was the Hapi or Apis bull of Memphis, in whom Ptah was said to be incarnate and who was Osirified and became the Osir-hapi. Thus appears to have originated the great Ptolemaic god Serapis, as certainly the mausoleum of the bulls was the Serapeum of the Greeks. Another bull of a more massive breed was the Ur-mer or Mnevis of Heliopolis, in whom Ra was incarnate. A third bull was *Bakh* or Bakis of Hermonthis the incarnation of Mentu. And a fourth bull, *Kan-nub* or Kanobos, was worshipped at the city of that name. The cow was identified with Hathor, who appears with cow's ears and horns, and who is probably the cow-goddess Ashtaroth or Istar of Asia. Isis, as identified with Hathor, is also joined in this connection.

*The ram was also worshipped as a procreative god; at Mendes in the Delta identified with Osiris, at Herakleopolis identified with Hershefi, at Thebes as Amon, and at the Cataract as Khnumu the creator.* The association of the ram with Amon was strongly held by the Ethiopians; and in the Greek tale of Nektanebo, the last Pharaoh, having by magic visited Olympias and become the father of Alexander, he came as the incarnation of Amon wearing the ram's skin.

The hippopotamus was the goddess Ta-urt, "the great one," the patroness of pregnancy, who is never shown in any other form. Rarely this animal appears as the emblem of the god Set.

The jackal haunted the cemeteries on the edge of the desert, and so came to be taken as the guardian of the dead, and identified with Anubis, the god of departing souls. Another aspect of the jackal was as the maker of tracks in the desert; the jackal paths are the best guides to practicable courses, avoiding the valleys and precipices, and so the animal was known as Up-uat, "the opener of ways," who showed the way for the dead across the western desert. Species of dogs seem to have been held sacred and mummified on merely the general ground of confusion with the jackal. The ichneumon and the shrewmouse were also held sacred, though not identified with a human god.

The hawk was the principal sacred bird, and was identified with Horus and Ra, the sun-god. It was mainly worshipped at Edfu and



Hierakonpolis. The souls of kings were supposed to fly up to heaven in the form of hawks, perhaps due to the kingship originating in the hawk district in upper Egypt. Seker, the god of the dead, appears as a mummified hawk, and on his boat are many small hawks, perhaps the souls of kings who have joined him. The mummy hawk is also Sopdu, the god of the east.

The vulture was the emblem of maternity, as being supposed to care especially for her young. Hence she is identified with Mut, the mother goddess of Thebes. The queen-mothers have vulture head-dresses; the vulture is shown hovering over kings to protect them, and a row of spread-out vultures are figured on the roofs of the tomb passages to protect the soul. The ibis was identified with Tahuti, the god of Hermopolis. The goose is connected with Amon of Thebes. The swallow was also sacred.

The crocodile was worshipped especially in the Fayum, where it frequented the marshy levels of the great lake, and Strabo's description of the feeding of the sacred crocodile there is familiar. It was also worshipped at Onuphis; and at Nubti or Ombos it was identified with Set, and held sacred.

Beside the name of Sebek or Soukhos in Fayum, it was there identified with Osiris as the western god of the dead. The frog was an emblem of the goddess Heqt, but was not worshipped.

The cobra serpent was sacred from the earliest times to the present day. It was never identified with any of the great deities, but three goddesses appear in serpent form: Uazet, the Delta goddess of Buto; Mert-seger, "the lover of silence," the goddess of the Theban necropolis; and Rannut, the harvest goddess. The memory of great pythons of the prehistoric days appears in the serpent-necked monsters on the slate palettes at the beginning of the monarchy, and the immense serpent Agap of the underworld in the later mythology. The serpent has however been a popular object of worship apart from specific gods. We have already noted it on prehistoric amulets, and coiled round the hearths of the early dynasties. Serpents were mummified; and when we reach the full evidences of popular worship, in the terra-cotta figures and jewellery of later times, the serpent is very prominent. There were usually two represented together, one often with the head of Serapis, the other of Isis, so therefore male and female. Down to modern times a serpent is

worshipped at Sheykh Heridy, and miraculous cures attributed to it (S. R. E. B. 213).

Various fishes were sacred, as the Oxyrhynchos, Phagros, Lepidotos, Latos, and others; but they were not identified with gods, and we do not know of their being worshipped. The scorpion was the emblem of the goddess Selk, and is found in prehistoric amulets; but it is not known to have been adored, and most usually it represents evils, where Horus is shown overcoming noxious creatures.

It will be observed that nearly all of the animals which were worshipped had qualities for which they were noted, and in connection with which they were venerated. If the animal worship were due to totemism, or a sense of animal brotherhood in certain tribes, we must also assume that that was due to these qualities of the animal; whereas totemism in other countries does not seem to be due to veneration of special qualities of the animals. It is therefore more likely that the animal worship simply arose from the nature of the animals, and not from any true totemism, although each animal came to be associated with the worship of a particular tribe or district.

## THE GROUPS OF GODS

In a country which has been subjected to so many inflows of various peoples as has Egypt, it is to be expected that there would be a great diversity of deities and a complex and inconsistent theology. To discriminate the principal classes of conceptions of gods is the first step toward understanding the growth of the systems. The broad diversion of animal gods and human gods is obvious; and the mixed type of human figures with animal heads is clearly an adaptation of the animal gods to the later conception of a human god. Another valuable separator lies in the compound names of gods. It is impossible to suppose a people uniting two gods, both of which belonged to them aboriginally; there would be no reason for two similar gods in a single system, and we never hear in classical mythology of Hermes-Apollo or Pallas-Artemis, while Zeus is compounded with half of the barbarian gods of Asia. So in Egypt, when we find such compounds as Amon-Ra, or Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, we have the certainty that each name in the compound is derived from a different race, and that a unifying operation has taken place on gods that belonged to entirely different sources.

We must beware of reading our modern ideas into the ancient views. As we noticed in an earlier part of this chapter, each tribe or locality seems to have had but one god originally; certainly the more remote our view, the more separate are the gods. Hence to the people of any one district "the god" was a distinctive name for their own god; and it would have seemed as strange to discriminate him from the surrounding gods, as it would to a Christian in Europe if he specified that he did not mean Allah or Siva or Heaven when he speaks of God. Hence we find generic descriptions used in place of the god's name, as "lord of heaven," or "mistress of turquoise," while it is certain that specific gods as Osiris or Hathor are in view. A generic name "god" or "the god" no more implies that the Egyptians recognised a unity of all the gods, than "god" in the Old Testament implies that Yahvah was one with Chemosh and Baal. The simplicity of the term only shows that no other object of adoration was in view.

We have already noticed the purely animal gods; following on these we now shall describe those which were combined with a human form, then those which are purely human in their character, next those which are nature gods, and lastly those which are an abstract character.

*Animal-headed Gods:* Beside the worship of species of animals, which we have noticed in the last chapter, certain animals were combined with the human form. It was always the head of the animal which was united to a human body; the only converse instance of a human head on an animal body--the sphinxes--represented the king and not a god. Possibly the combination arose from priests wearing the heads of animals when personating the god, as the high priest wore the ram's skin when personating Amon. But when we notice the frequent combinations and love of symbolism, shown upon the early carvings, the union of the ancient sacred animal with the human form is quite in keeping with the views and feelings of the primitive Egyptians. Many of these composite gods never emerged from the animal connection, and these we must regard as belonging to the earlier stage of theology.

*Seker* was a Memphite god of the dead, independent of the worship of Osiris and of Ptah, for he was combined with them as Ptah-Seker-Osiris; as he maintained a place there in the face of the great worship of Ptah, he was probably an older god, and this is indicated by his having an entirely animal form down to a late date. The sacred bark of Seker bore his figure as that of a mummified hawk; and along the boat is a row of hawks which probably are the spirits of deceased kings who have joined Seker in his journey to the world of the dead. As there are often

two allied forms of the same root, one written with *k* and the other with *g*, it seems probable that Seker, the funeral god of Memphis, is allied to

*Mert Seger* (lover of silence). She was the funeral god of Thebes, and was usually figured as a serpent. From being only known in animal form, and unconnected with any of the elaborated theology, it seems that we have in this goddess a primitive deity of the dead. It appears, then, that the gods of the great cemeteries were known as Silence and the Lover of Silence, and both come down from the age of animal deities. Seker became in late times changed into a hawk-headed human figure.

Two important deities of early times were *Nekhebt*, the vulture goddess of the southern kingdom, centred at Hierakonpolis, and *Uazet*, the serpent goddess of the northern kingdom, centred at Buto. These appear in all ages as the emblems of the two kingdoms, frequently as supporters on either side of the royal names; in later times they appear as human goddesses crowning the king.

*Khnumu*, the creator, was the great god of the cataract. He is shown as making man upon the potter's wheel; and in a tale he is said to frame a woman. He must belong to a different source from that of Ptah or Ra, and was the creative principle in the period of animal gods, as he is almost always shown with the head of a ram. He was popular down to late times, where amulets of his figure are often found.

*Tahuti*, or *Thôth*, was the god of writing and learning, and was the chief deity of Hermopolis. He almost always has the head of an ibis, the bird sacred to him. The baboon is also a frequent emblem of his, but he is never figured with the baboon head. The ibis appears standing upon a shrine as early as on a tablet of Mena; Thôth is the constant recorder in scenes of the judgment, and he appears down to Roman times as the patron of scribes. The eighteenth dynasty of kings incorporated his name as Thôthmes, "born of Thôth," owing to their Hermopolite origin.

*Skhmet* is the lion goddess, who represents the fierceness of the sun's heat. She appears in the myth of the destruction of mankind as slaughtering the enemies of Ra. Her only form is that with the head of a lioness. But she blends imperceptibly with

*Bastet*, who has the head of a cat. She was the goddess of Pa-bast or Bubastis, and in her honor immense festivals were there held. Her name is found in the beginning of the pyramid times; but her main period of

popularity was that of the Shisaks who ruled from Bubastis, and in the later times images of her were very frequent as amulets. It is possible from the name that this feline goddess, whose foreign origin is acknowledged, was the female form of the god Bes, who is dressed in a lion's skin, and also came in from the east.

*Mentu* was the hawk-god of Erment south of Thebes, who became in the eighteenth to twentieth dynasties especially the god of war. He appears with the hawk head, or sometimes as a hawk-headed sphinx; and he became confused with Ra and with Amon.

*Sebek* is figured as a man with the crocodile's head; but he has no theologic importance, and always remained the local god of certain districts.

*Heqt*, the goddess symbolised by the frog, was the patron of birth, and assisted in the infancy of the kings. She was a popular and general deity not mainly associated with particular places.

*Hershefi* was the ram-headed god of Herakleopolis, but is never found outside of that region.

We now come to three animal-headed gods who became associated with the great Osiride group of human gods. *Set* or *Setesh* was the god of the prehistoric inhabitants before the coming in of Horus. He is always shown with the head of a fabulous animal, having upright square ears and a long nose. When in entirely animal form he has a long upright tail. The dog-like animal is the earliest type, as in the second dynasty; but later the human form with animal head prevailed. His worship underwent great fluctuations. At first he was the great god of all Egypt; but his worshippers were gradually driven out by the followers of Horus, as described in a semi-mythical history. Then he appears strongly in the second dynasty, the last king of which united the worship of Set and Horus. After suppression he appears in favor in the early eighteenth dynasty; and even gave the name to Sety I and II of the nineteenth dynasty. His part in the Osiris myth will be noted below.

*Anpu* or *Anubis* was originally the jackal guardian of the cemetery, and the leader of the dead in the other world. Nearly all the early funeral formulæ mention Anpu on his hill, or Anpu lord of the underworld. As the patron of the dead he naturally took a place in the myth of Osiris,

the god of the dead, and appears as leading the soul into the judgment of Osiris.

*Horus* was the hawk-god of upper Egypt, especially of Edfu and Hierakonpolis. Though originally an independent god, and even keeping apart as Hor-ur, "Horus the elder," throughout later times, yet he was early mingled with the Osiris myth, probably as the ejector of Set who was also the enemy of Osiris. He is sometimes entirely in hawk form; more usually with a hawk's head, and in later times he appears as the infant son of Isis entirely human in form. His special function is that of overcoming evil; in the earliest days the conqueror of Set, later as the subduer of noxious animals, figured on a very popular amulet, and lastly, in Roman times, as a hawk-headed warrior on horseback slaying a dragon, thus passing into the type of St. George. He also became mingled with early Christian ideas; and the lock of hair of Horus attached to the cross originated the *chi rho* monogram of Christ.

We have now passed briefly over the principal gods which combined the animal and human forms. We see how the animal form is generally the older, and how it was apparently independent of the human form, which has been attached to it by a more anthropomorphic people. We see that all of these gods must be accredited to the second stratum, if not, to the earliest formation, of religion in Egypt. And we must associate with this theology the cemetery theory of the soul which preceded that of the Osiris or Ra religions.

We now turn to the deities which are always represented in human form, and never associated with animal figures; neither do they originate in a cosmic--or nature--worship, nor in abstract idea. There are three divisions of this class, the Osiris family, the Amon family, and the goddess Neit.

## GODS IN HUMAN FORM

Osiris--*Asar* or *Asir*--is the most familiar figure of the pantheon, but it is mainly on late sources that we have to depend for the myth; and his worship was so much adapted to harmonize with other ideas, that care is needed to trace his true position. The Osiride portions of the *Book of the Dead* are certainly very early, and precede the solar portions, though both views were already mingled in the pyramid texts. We cannot doubt but that the Osiris worship reaches back to the prehistoric age. In the earliest tombs offering to Anubis is named, for whom Osiris became

substituted in the fifth and sixth dynasties. In the pyramid times we only find that kings are termed Osiris, having undergone their apotheosis at the *sed* festival; but in the eighteenth dynasty and onward every justified person was entitled the Osiris, as being united with the god. His worship was unknown at Abydos in the earlier temples, and is not mentioned at the cataracts; though in later times he became the leading deity of Abydos and of Philæ. Thus in all directions the recognition of Osiris continued to increase; but, looking at the antiquity of his cult, we must recognize in this change the gradual triumph of a popular religion over a state religion which had been superimposed upon it. The earliest phase of Osirism that we can identify is in portions of the *Book of the Dead*. These assume the kingdom of Osiris, and a judgment preceding admission to the blessed future; the completely human character of Osiris and his family are implied, and there is no trace of animal or nature worship belonging to him. How far the myth, as recorded in Roman times by Plutarch, can be traced to earlier and later sources is very uncertain. The main outlines, which may be primitive, are as follows. Osiris was a civilising king of Egypt, who was murdered by his brother Set and seventy-two conspirators. Isis, his wife, found the coffin of Osiris at Byblos in Syria and brought it to Egypt. Set then tore up the body of Osiris and scattered it. Isis sought the fragments, and built a shrine over each of them. Isis and Horus then attacked Set and drove him from Egypt, and finally down the Red Sea. In other aspects Osiris seems to have been a corn god, and the scattering of his body in Egypt is like the well-known division of the sacrifice to the corn god, and the burial of parts in separate fields to ensure their fertility.

How we are to analyse the formation of the early myths is suggested by the known changes of later times. When two tribes who worshipped different (rods fought together and one overcame the other, the god of the conqueror is always considered to have overcome the god of the vanquished. The struggle of Horus and Set is expressly stated on the Temple of Edfu to have been a tribal war, in which the followers of Horus overcame those of Set, established garrisons and forges at various places down the Nile Valley, and finally ousted the Set party from the whole land. We can hardly therefore avoid reading the history of the animosities of the gods as being the struggles of their worshippers.

If we try to trace the historic basis of the Osiris myth, we must take into account the early customs and ideas among which the myths arose. The cutting up of the body was the regular ritual of the prehistoric people,

and, even as late as the fifth dynasty, the bones were separately treated, and even wrapped up separately when the body was reunited for burial. We must also notice the apotheosis festival of the king, which was probably his sacrificial death and union with the god, in the prehistoric age. The course of events which might have served as the basis for the Osiris myth may then have been somewhat as follows. Osiris was the god of a tribe which occupied a large part of Egypt. The kings of this tribe were sacrificed after thirty years' reign--like the killing of kings at fixed intervals elsewhere--and they thus became the Osiris himself. Their bodies were dismembered, as usual at that period, the flesh ceremonially eaten by the assembled people--as was done in prehistoric times--and the bones distributed among the various centres of the tribe, the head to Abydos, the neck, spine, limbs, etc., to various places of which there were fourteen in all. The worshippers of Set broke in upon this people, stopped this worship, or killed Osiris, as was said, and established the dominion of their animal god. They were in turn attacked by the Isis worshippers, who joined the older population of the Osiris tribe, reopened the shrines, and established Osiris worship again. The Set tribe returning in force attacked the Osiris tribe and scattered all the relics of the shrines in every part of the land. To re-establish their power, the Osiris and Isis tribes called in the worshippers of the hawk Horus, who were old enemies of the Set tribe, and with their help finally expelled the Set worshippers from the whole country. Such a history, somewhat misunderstood in a later age when the sacrifice of kings and anthropophagy was forgotten, would give the basis for nearly all the features of the Osiris myth as recorded in Roman times.

If we try to materialize this history more closely, we see that the Osiris worshippers occupied both the Delta and upper Egypt, and that fourteen important centres were recognised at the earliest time, which afterwards became the capitals of nomes, and were added to until they numbered forty-two divisions in later ages. Set was the god of the Asiatic invaders who broke in upon this civilization; and about a quarter through the long ages of the prehistoric culture, perhaps 7500 B.C., we find material evidences of considerable changes brought in from the Arabian or Semitic side. It may not be unlikely that this was the first triumph of Set. The Isis worshippers came from the Delta, where Isis was worshipped at Buto as a virgin goddess, apart from Osiris or Horus. These followers of Isis succeeded in helping the rest of the early Libyan inhabitants to resist the Set worship, and re-establish Osiris. The close of the prehistoric age is marked by a great decline in work and abilities, very likely due to more trouble from Asia, when Set scattered the relics of Osiris. Lastly we cannot avoid seeing in the Horus



triumph the conquest of Egypt by the dynastic race who came down from the district of Edfu and Hierakonpolis, the centres of Horus worship; and helped the older inhabitants to drive out the Asiatics. Nearly the same chain of events is seen in later times, when the Berber king Aahmes I helped the Egyptians to expel the Hyksos. If we can thus succeed in connecting the archæology of the prehistoric age with the history preserved in the myths, it shows that Osiris must have been the national god as early as the beginning of prehistoric culture. His civilizing mission may well have been the introduction of cultivation, at about 8000 B.C., into the Nile Valley.

The theology of Osiris was at first that of a god of those holy fields in which the souls of the dead enjoyed a future life. There was necessarily some selection to exclude the wicked from such happiness, and Osiris judged each soul whether it were worthy. This judgment became elaborated in detailed scenes, where Isis and Neb-hat stand behind Osiris who is on his throne, Anubis leads in the soul, the heart is placed in the balance, and Thôth stands to weigh it and to record the result. The occupation of the souls in this future we have noticed in an earlier part of this chapter. The function of Osiris was therefore the reception and rule of the dead, and we never find him as a god of action or patronizing any of the affairs of life.

Isis--*Aset* or *Isit*--became attached at a very early time to the Osiris worship; and appears in later myths as the sister and wife of Osiris. But she always remained on a very different plane to Osiris. Her worship and priesthood were far more popular than those of Osiris, and she appears far more usually in the activities of life. Her union in the Osiris myth by no means blotted out her independent position and importance as a deity, though it gave her a far more widespread devotion. The union of Horus with the myth, and the establishment of Isis as the mother goddess, was the main mode of her importance in later times. Isis as the nursing mother is seldom shown until the twenty-sixth dynasty; then the type continually became more popular, until it outgrew all other religions of the country. In the Roman times the mother Isis not only received the devotion of all Egypt, but her worship spread rapidly abroad, like that of Mithra. It became the popular devotion of Italy; and, after a change of name due to the growth of Christianity, she has continued to receive the adoration of a large part of Europe down to the present day as the Madonna.

Nephthys--*Neb-hat*--was a shadowy double of Isis; reputedly her sister, and always associated with her, she seems to have no other function.

Her name, "mistress of the palace," suggests that she was the consort of Osiris at the first, as a necessary but passive complement in the system of his kingdom. When the active Isis worship entered into the renovation of Osiris, Nebhat remained of nominal importance, but practically ignored.

Horus--*Heru* or *Horu*--has a more complex history than any other god. We cannot assign the various stages of it with certainty, but we can discriminate the following ideas:

(a) There was an elder or greater Horus, *Hor-ur*--or Aroeris of the Greeks--who was credited with being the brother of Osiris, older than Isis, Set, or Nephthys. He was always in human form, and was the god of Letopolis. This seems to have been the primitive god of a tribe cognate to the Osiris worshippers. What connection this god had with the hawk we do not know; often Horus is found written without the hawk, simply as *hr*, with the meaning of "upper" or "above." This word generally has the determinative of sky, and so means primitively the sky or one belonging to the sky. It is at least possible that there was a sky-god *her* at Letopolis, and likewise the hawk-god was a sky-god *her* at Edfu, and hence the mixture of the two deities.

(b) The hawk-god of the south, at Edfu and Hierakonpolis, became so firmly embedded in the myth as the avenger of Osiris, that we must accept the southern people as the ejectors of the Set tribe. It is always the hawk-headed Horus who wars against Set, and attends on the enthroned Osiris.

(c) The hawk Horus became identified with the sun-god, and hence came the winged solar disk as the emblem of Horus of Edfu, and the title of Horus on the horizons--at rising and setting--*Hor-emakhti*, *Harmakhis* of the Greeks.

(d) Another aspect resulting from Horus being the "sky" god, was that the sun and moon were his two eyes; hence he was *Hor-merti*, Horus of the two eyes; and the sacred eye of Horus--*uza*--became the most usual of all amulets.

(e) Horus, as conqueror of Set, appears as the hawk standing on the sign of gold, *nub*, *nubti* was the title of Set, and thus Horus is shown trampling upon Set; this became a usual title of the kings. There are

many less important forms of Horus, but the form which outgrew all others in popular estimation was

(f) Hor-pe-khroti, Harpocrates of the Greeks, "Horus the child." As the son of Isis he constantly appears from the nineteenth dynasty onward. One of the earlier of these forms is that of the boy Horus standing upon crocodiles, and grasping scorpions and noxious animals in his hands. This type was a favorite amulet down to Ptolemaic times, and is often found carved in stone to be placed in a house, but was scarcely ever made in other materials or for suspension on the person. The form of the young Horus seated on an open lotus flower was also popular in the Greek times. But the infant Horus with his finger to his lips was the most popular form of all, sometimes alone, sometimes on his mother's lap. The finger, which pointed to his being a sucking child, was absurdly misunderstood by the Greeks as an emblem of silence. From the twenty-sixth dynasty down to late Roman times the infant Horus, or the young boy, was the most prominent subject on the temples, and the commonest figure in the homes of the people.

The other main group of human gods was Amon, Mut, and Khonsu of Thebes. *Amon* was the local god of Karnak, and owed his importance in Egypt to the political rise of his district. The Theban kingdom of the twelfth dynasty spread his fame, the great kings of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasty ascribed their victories to Amon, his high priest became a political power which absorbed the state after the twentieth dynasty, and the importance of the god only ceased with the fall of his city. The original attributes and the origin of the name of Amon are unknown; but he became combined with Ra, the sun-god, and as Amon-Ra he was "king of the gods," and "lord of the thrones of the world." The supremacy of Amon was for some centuries an article of political faith, and many other gods were merged in him, and only survived as aspects of the great god of all. The queens were the high priestesses of the god, and he was the divine father of their children; the kings being only incarnations of Amon in their relation to the queens.

*Mut*, the great mother, was the goddess of Thebes, and hence the consort of Amon. She is often shown as leading and protecting the kings, and the queens appear in the character of this goddess. Little is known about her otherwise.

*Khonsu* is a youthful god combined in the Theban system as the son of Amon and Mut. He is closely parallel to Thôth as being a god of time, as

a moon god, and of science, "the executor of plans." A large temple was dedicated to him at Karnak, but otherwise he was not of religious importance.

*Neit* was a goddess of the Libyan people; but her worship was firmly implanted by them in Egypt. She was a goddess of hunting and of weaving, the two arts of a nomadic people. Her emblem was a distaff with two crossed arrows, and her name was written with a figure of a weaver's shuttle.

She was adored in the first dynasty, when the name *Merneit*, "loved by *Neit*," occurs; and her priesthood was one of the most usual in the pyramid period. She was almost lost to sight during some thousands of years, but she became the state goddess of the twenty-sixth dynasty, when the Libyans set up their capital in her city of Sais. In later times she again disappears from customary religion.

## SUN AND SKY GODS

The gods which personify the sun and sky stand apart in their essential idea from those already described, although they were largely mixed and combined with other classes of gods. So much did this mixture pervade all the later views that some writers have seen nothing but varying forms of sun-worship in Egyptian religion. It will have been noticed however in the foregoing what a large body of theology was entirely apart from the sun-worship, while here we treat the latter as separate from the other elements with which it was more or less combined.

*Ra* was the great sun-god to whom every king pledged himself, by adopting on his accession a motto-title embodying the god's name such as *Ra-men-kau*, "Ra established the kas"; *Ra-sehotep-ab*, "Ra satisfied the heart"; *Ra-neb-maat*, "Ra is the lord of truth," and these titles were those by which the king was best known ever after. This devotion was not primitive, but began in the fourth dynasty, and was established by the fifth dynasty being called sons of Ra, and every later king having the title "son of Ra" before his name. The obelisk was the emblem of Ra, and in the fifth dynasty a great obelisk temple was built in his honor at Abusir, followed also by others. Heliopolis was the centre of his worship, where Senusert I, in the twelfth dynasty, rebuilt the temple and erected the obelisks, one of which is still standing. But Ra was preceded there by another sun-god, *Atmu*, who was the true god of the

nome; and Ra, though worshipped throughout the land, was not the aboriginal god of any city. In Heliopolis he was attached to Atmu, at Thebes attached to Amen. These facts point to Ra having been introduced into Egypt by a conquering people, after the theologic settlement of the whole land. There are many suggestions that the Ra worshippers came in from Asia, and established their rule at Heliopolis. The title of the ruler of that place was the *heq*, a semitic title; and the *heq* sceptre was the sacred treasure of the temple. The "spirits of Heliopolis" were specially honored, an idea more Babylonian than Egyptian. This city was a centre of literary learning and of theologic theorizing which was unknown elsewhere in Egypt, but familiar in Mesopotamia. A conical stone was the embodiment of the god at Heliopolis, as in Syria. *On*, the native name of Heliopolis, occurs twice in Syria, as well as other cities named Heliopolis there in later times. The view of an early Semitic principate of Heliopolis, before the dynastic age, would unify all of these facts; and the advance of Ra worship in the fifth dynasty would be due to a revival of the influence of the eastern Delta at that time.

The form of Ra most free from admixture is that of the disk of the sun, sometimes figured between two hills at rising, sometimes between two wings, sometimes in the boat in which it floated on the celestial ocean across the sky. The winged disk has almost always two cobra serpents attached to it, and often two rams' horns; the meaning of the whole combination is that Ra protects and preserves, like the vulture brooding over its young, destroys like the cobra, and creates like the ram. This is seen by the modifications where it is placed over a king's head, when the destructive cobra is omitted, and the wings are folded together as embracing and protecting the king.

This disk form is connected with the hawk-god, by being placed over the head of the hawk; and this in turn is connected with the human form by the disk resting on the hawk-headed man, which is one of the most usual types of Ra. The god is but seldom shown as being purely human, except when identified with other gods, such as Atmu, Horus, or Amon.

The worship of Ra outshone all others in the nineteenth dynasty. United to the god of Thebes as Amon Ra, he became "king of the gods," and the view that the soul joined Ra in his journey through the hours of the night absorbed all other views, which only became sections of this whole. By the Greek times this belief seems to have practically given place to others, and it had practically vanished in the early Christian age.

*Atmu* (Tum) was the original god of Heliopolis and the Delta side, round to the gulf of Suez, which formerly reached up to Ismailiyeh. How far his nature as the setting sun was the result of his being identified with Ra, is not clear. It may be that the introduction of Ra led to his being unified with him. Those who take the view that the names of gods are connected with tribes, as Set and Suti, and Anak, might well claim that Atmu and Atum belonged to the land of Aduma or Etham.

*Khepera* has no local importance, but is named as the morning sun. He was worshipped about the time of the nineteenth dynasty.

*Aten* was a conception of the sun entirely different from Ra. No human or animal form was ever attached to it; and the adoration of the physical power and action of the sun was the sole devotion. So far as we can trace, it was a worship entirely apart and different from every other type of religion in Egypt; and the partial information that we have about it does not so far, show a single flaw in a purely scientific conception of the source of all life and power upon earth. The Aten was the only instance of a "jealous god" in Egypt, and this worship was exclusive of all others, and claims universality. There are traces of it shortly before Amenhotep III. He showed some devotion to it, and it was his son who took the name of Akhenaten, "the glory of the Aten," and tried to enforce this as the sole worship of Egypt. But it fell immediately after, and is lost in the next dynasty. The sun is represented as radiating its beams on all things, and every beam ends in a hand which imparts life and power to the king and to all else. In the hymn to the Aten the universal scope of this power is proclaimed as the source of all life and action, and every land and people are subject to it, and owe to it their existence and their allegiance. No such grand theology had ever appeared in the world before, so far as we know; and it is the forerunner of the later monotheist religions, while it is even more abstract and impersonal, and may well rank as a scientific theism.

*Anher* was the local god of Thinis in upper Egypt, and Sebennytos in the Delta a human sun-god. His name is a mere epithet, "he who goes in heaven"; and it may well be that this was only a title of Ra, who was thus worshipped at these places.

*Sopdu* was the god of the eastern desert, and he was identified with the cone of glowing zodiacal light which precedes the sunrise. His emblem was a mummified hawk, or a human figure.

*Nut*, the embodiment of heaven, is shown as a female figure dotted over with stars. She was not worshipped nor did she belong to any one place, but was a cosmogonic idea.

*Seb*, the embodiment of the earth, is figured as lying on the ground while Nut bends over him.

He was the "prince of the gods," the power that went before all the later gods, the superseded Saturn of Egyptian theology. He is rarely mentioned, and no temples were dedicated to him, but he appears in the cosmic mythology. It seems, from their positions, that very possibly the Set and Nut were the primeval gods of the aborigines of Hottentot type, before the Osiris worshippers of European type ever entered the Nile Valley.

*Shu* was the god of space, who lifted up Nut from off the body of Seb. He was often represented, especially in late amulets; possibly it was believed that he would likewise raise up the body of the deceased from earth to heaven. His figure is entirely human, and he kneels on one knee with both hands lifted above his head. He was regarded as the father of Seb, the earth having been formed from space or chaos. His emblem was the ostrich feather, the lightest and most voluminous object.

*Hapi*, the Nile, must also be placed with nature-gods. He is figured as a man, or two men for the upper and lower Niles, holding a tray of produce of the land, and having large female breasts as being the nourisher of the valley. A favourite group consists of the two Nile figures tying the plants of upper and lower Egypt around the emblem of union. He was worshipped at Nilopolis, and also at the shrines which marked the boating stages, about a hundred in number, all along the river. Festivals were held at the rising of the Nile, like those still kept up at various stages of the inundation. Hymns in honor of the river attribute all prosperity and good to its benefits.

*Ptah*, the creator, was especially worshipped at Memphis. He is figured as a mummy; and we know that full length burial and mummifying begin with the dynastic race. He was identified with the earlier animal-worship of the bull Apis; but it is not likely that this originated his creative aspect, as he creates by moulding clay, or by word and will, and not by natural means. He became united with the old Memphite god of the dead, Seker, and with Osiris, as Ptah-Seker-Osiris. Thus we

learn that he belonged neither to the animal worshippers, the believers in Seker, nor to the Osiride race, but to a fourth people.

*Min was the male principle. He was worshipped mainly at Ekhmin and Koptos, and was there identified with Pan by the Greeks.* He also was the god of the desert, out to the Red Sea. The oldest statues of gods are three gigantic limestone figures of Min found at Koptos; these bear relief designs of Red Sea shells and swordfish. It seems, then, that he was introduced by a people coming across from the east. His worship continued till Roman times.

*Hathor was the female principle whose animal was the cow; and she is identified with the mother Isis. She was also identified with other earlier deities; and her forms are very numerous in different localities. There were also seven Hathors who appear as fates, presiding over birth.*

### CHAPTER III

#### THE PTAH-HOTEP AND THE KE'GEMNI: THE OLDEST BOOKS IN THE WORLD

THE Instructions of Ptah-hotep and of Ke'gemni possess, apart from the curious nature of their contents, a feature of the greatest interest, and an adequate claim on the notice of all persons interested in literature and its history. For if the datings and ascriptions in them be accepted as trustworthy--there is no reason why they should not be accepted--they were composed about four thousand years before Christ, and three thousand five hundred and fifty years before Christ, respectively. And the significance of those remote dates is, that they are the oldest books in the world, the earliest extant specimens of the literary art. They stand on the extreme horizon of all that ocean of paper and ink that has become to us as an atmosphere, a fifth element, an essential of life.

Books of many kinds had of course been written for centuries before Ptah-hotep of Memphis summarised, for the benefit of future generations, the leading principles of morality current in his day; even before the Vizier, five hundred years earlier, gave to his children the scroll which they prized above all things on earth;<sup>1</sup> but those have perished and these remain. There are lists of titles which have a large sound, and prayers to the gods for all good things, on the tombs and monuments of kings and magnates long before the time Ke'gemni; but those are not books in any sense of that word. Even the long, strange



chants and spells engraven in the royal pyramids over against Memphis are later than the time of Ptah-hotep, and cannot be called books in their present form, although some of them apparently originated before the First Dynasty.

Nor do the oldest books of any other country approach these two in antiquity. To draw comparisons between them let us, in imagination, place ourselves at the period at which Ptah-hotep lived, that is about B.C. 3550, "under King Isosi, living forever," and take a glance at futurity.

The Babylonians are doubtless exercising their literary talents; but they will leave nothing worthy the name of book to the far posterity of fifty-four centuries hence. Thirteen centuries shall pass before Hammurabi, King of Babylon, drafts the code of laws that will be found at that time. Only after two thousand years shall Moses write on the origin of things, and the Vedas be arranged in their present form. It will be two-and-a-half thousand years before the Great King of Jerusalem will set in order many proverbs and write books so much resembling, in form and style, that of Ptah-hotep; before the source and summit of European literature will write his world epics. For the space of years between Solomon and ourselves, great though it seem, is not so great as that between Solomon and Ptah-hotep.

Nothing definite is known concerning these two nobles beyond what is said of them in their works. A fine tomb of a certain Ke'gemni exists at Memphis; his titles, so far as can be ascertained, are: Judge of the High Court; Governor of the Land unto its Limit, South and North; Director of every Command. He has sometimes been supposed to be identical with our Ke'gemni; but I am assured by those most competent to judge that this tomb cannot be earlier than the fifth dynasty,--a good three hundred years from the date assigned to the moralist,--so that the theory that they are one person may be dismissed as highly improbable. No other person of the name is known.

The position is much the same with Ptah-hotep. There are near Memphis the tombs of several nobles of this name, of whom two lived in the reign of Isosi; and in this case, again, it has been assumed that one of these two must be the writer of the Instruction. But in neither instance do the titles coincide with or include those assigned to him. The highest title which he bears, *Eldest Son of the King*, does not anywhere appear in these tombs. It is true that one of these

contemporaries was *hereditary chief*; but we know that Ptah-hotep was a common name at this time, and in the absence of more certain proof it will be well to abstain from the identification of like names upon insufficient grounds.

### THE INSTRUCTION OF PTAH-HOTEP (THE GOD PTAH IS SATISFIED)

The Instruction of the Governor of his City, the Vizier, Ptah-hotep, in the Reign of King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Isosi, living forever, to the end of Time.

A. The Governor of his City, the Vizier, Ptah-hotep, he said: "O Prince my Lord, the end of life is at hand; old age descendeth--upon me--; feebleness cometh, and childishness is renewed. He--that is old--lieth down in misery every day. The eyes are small; the ears are deaf. Energy is diminished, the heart hath no rest. The mouth is silent, and he speaketh no word; the heart stoppeth, and he remembereth not yesterday. The bones are painful throughout the body; good turneth into evil. All taste departeth. These things doeth old age for mankind, being evil in all things. The nose is stopped, and he breatheth not for weakness (?), whether standing or sitting.

"Command thy servant, therefore, to make over my, princely authority--to my son--. Let me speak unto him the words of them that hearken to the counsel of the men of old time; those that once hearkened unto the gods. I pray thee, let this thing be done, that sin may be banished from among persons of understanding, that thou may enlighten the lands."

Said the Majesty of this God: "Instruct him, then, in the words of old time; may he be a wonder unto the children of princes, that they may enter and hearken with him. Make straight all their hearts; and discourse with him, without causing weariness."

B. Here begin the proverbs of fair speech, spoken by the Hereditary Chief, the Holy Father, Beloved of the God, the Eldest Son of the King, of his body, the Governor of his City, the Vizier, Ptah-hotep, when instructing the ignorant in the knowledge of exactness in fair speaking; the glory of him that obeyeth, the shame of him that transgresseth them. He said unto his son:

1. Be not proud because thou art learned; but discourse with the ignorant man, as with the sage. For no limit can be set to skill, neither is there any craftsman that possesseth full advantages. Fair speech is more rare than the emerald that is found by slave-maidens on the pebbles.

2. If thou find an arguer talking, one that is well disposed and wiser than thou, let thine arms fall, bend thy back, be not angry with him if he agree (?) not with thee. Refrain from speaking evilly; oppose him not at any time when he speaketh. If he address thee as one ignorant of the matter, thine humbleness shall bear away his contentions.

3. If thou find an arguer talking, thy fellow, one that is within thy reach, keep not silence when he saith aught that is evil; so shalt thou be wiser than he. Great will be the applause on the part of the listeners, and thy name shall be good in the knowledge of princes.

4. If thou find an arguer talking, a poor man, that is to say not thine equal, be not scornful toward him because he is lowly. Let him alone; then shall he confound himself. Question him not to please thine heart, neither pour out thy wrath upon him that is before thee; it is shameful to confuse a mean mind. If thou be about to do that which is in thine heart, overcome it as a thing rejected of princes.

5. If thou be a leader, as one directing the conduct of the multitude, endeavor always to be gracious, that thine own conduct be without defect. Great is Truth, appointing a straight path; never hath it been overthrown since the reign of Osiris. One that oversteppeth the laws shall be punished. Overstepping is by the covetous man; but degradations (?) bear off his riches. Never hath evil-doing, brought its venture safe to port. For he saith, "I will obtain by myself for myself," and saith not, "I will obtain because I am allowed." But the limits of justice are steadfast; it is that which a man repeateth from his father.

6. Cause not fear among men; for--this--the God punisheth likewise. For there is a man that saith, "Therein is life"; and he is bereft of the bread of his mouth. There is a man that saith, "Power--is therein"; and he saith, "I seize for myself that which I perceive." Thus a man speaketh, and he is smitten down. It is another that attaineth by giving unto him that hath not. Never hath that which men have prepared for come to pass; for what the God hath commanded, even that thing cometh to pass. Live, therefore, in the house of kindliness, and men shall come and give gifts of themselves.

7. If thou be among the guests of a man that is greater than thou, accept that which he giveth thee, putting it to thy lips. If thou look at him that is before thee--thine host--pierce him not with many glances. It is abhorred of the soul to stare at him. Speak not until he address thee; one knoweth not what may be evil in his opinion. Speak when he questioneth thee; so shall thy speech be good in his opinion. The noble who sitteth before food divideth it as his soul moveth him; he giveth unto him that he would favour--it is the custom of the evening meal. It is his soul that guideth his hand. It is the noble that bestoweth, not the underling that attaineth. Thus the eating of bread is under the providence of the God; he is an ignorant man that disputeth it.

8. If thou be an emissary sent from one noble to another, be exact after the manner of him that sent thee, give his message even as he hath said it. Beware of making enmity by thy words, setting one noble against the other by perverting truth. Overstep it not, neither repeat that which any man, be he prince or peasant, saith in opening the heart; it is abhorrent to the soul.

9. If thou have ploughed, gather thine harvest in the field, and the God shall make it great under thine hand. Fill not thy mouth at any neighbor's table . . . If a crafty man be the possessor of wealth, he stealeth like a crocodile from the priests.

Let not a man be envious that hath no children; let him be neither downcast nor quarrelsome on account of it. For a father, though great, may be grieved; as to the mother of children, she hath less peace than another. Verily, each man is created--to his destiny--by the God, who is the chief of a tribe, trustful in following him.

10. If thou be lowly, serve a wise man, that all thine actions may be good before the God. If thou have known a man of none account that hath been advanced in rank, be not haughty toward him on account of that which thou knowest concerning him; but honour him that hath been advanced, according to that which he hath become.

Behold, riches come not of themselves; it is their rule for him that desireth them. If he bestir him and collect them himself, the God shall make him prosperous; but He shall punish him, if he be slothful.

11. Follow thine heart during thy lifetime; do not more than is commanded thee. Diminish not the time of following the heart; it is

abhorred of the soul, that its time--of ease--be taken away. Shorten not the daytime more than is needful to maintain thy house. When riches are gained, follow the heart; for riches are of no avail if one be weary.

12. If thou wouldest be a wise man, beget a son for the pleasing of the God. If he make straight his course after thine example, if he arrange thine affairs in due order, do unto him all that is good, for thy son is he, begotten of thine own soul. Sunder not thine heart from him, or thine own begotten shall curse--thee--. If he be heedless and trespass thy rules of conduct, and is violent; if every speech that cometh from his mouth be a vile word; then beat thou him, that his talk may be fitting. Keep him from those that make light of that which is commanded, for it is they that make him rebellious. And they that are guided go not astray, but they that lose their bearings cannot find a straight course.

13. If thou be in the chamber of council, act always according to the steps enjoined on thee at the beginning of the day. Be not absent, or thou shalt be expelled; but be ready in entering and making report. Wide is the seat of one that hath made address. The council chamber acteth by strict rule; and all its plans are in accordance with method. It is the God that advanceth one to a seat therein; the like is not done for elbowers.

14. If thou be among people, make for thyself love, the beginning and end of the heart. One that knoweth not his course shall say in himself--seeing thee--, "He that ordereth himself duly becometh the owner of wealth; I shall copy his conduct." Thy name shall be good, though thou speak not; thy body shall be fed; thy face shall be--seen--among thy neighbors; thou shalt be provided with what thou lackest. As to the man whose heart obeyeth his belly, he causeth disgust in place of love. His heart is wretched (?), his body is gross (?), he is insolent toward those endowed of the God. He that obeyeth his belly hath an enemy.

15. Report thine actions without concealment; discover thy conduct when in council with thine overlord. It is not evil for the envoy that his report be not answered. "Yea, I know it," by the prince; for that which he knoweth includeth not--this. If he--the prince--think that he will oppose him on account of it,--he thinketh--"He will be silent because I have spoken."

16. If thou be a leader, cause that the rules that thou hast enjoined be carried out; and do all things as one that remembereth the days coming

after, when speech availeth not. Be not lavish of favours; it leadeth to servility (?), producing slackness.

17. If thou be a leader, be gracious when thou hearkenest unto the speech of a suppliant. Let him not hesitate to deliver himself of that which he hath thought to tell thee; but be desirous of removing his injury. Let him speak freely, that the thing for which he hath come to thee may be done. If he hesitate to open his heart, it is said, "Is it because he--the judge--doeth the wrong that no entreaties are made to him concerning it by those to whom it happeneth?" But a well taught heart hearkeneth readily.

18. If thou desire to continue friendship in any abode wherein thou interest, be it as master, as brother, or as friend; wheresoever thou goest, beware of consorting with women. No place prospereth wherein that is done. Nor is it prudent to take part in it; a thousand men have been ruined for the pleasure of a little time short as a dream. Even death is reached thereby; it is a wretched thing. As for the evil liver, one leaveth him for what he doeth, he is avoided. If his desires be not gratified, he regardeth (?) no laws.

19. If thou desire that thine actions may be good, save thyself from all malice, and beware of the quality of covetousness, which is a grievous inner (?) Malady. Let it not chance that thou fall thereinto. It setteth at variance fathers-in-law and the kinsmen of the daughter-in-law; it sundereth the wife and the husband. It gathereth unto itself all evils; it is the girdle of all wickedness. But the man that is just flourisheth; truth goes in his footsteps, and he maketh habitations therein, not in the dwelling of covetousness.

20. Be not covetous as touching shares, in seizing that which is not thine own property. Be not covetous toward thy neighbors; for with a gentleman praise availeth more than might. He--that is covetous--cometh empty from among his neighbours, being void of the persuasion of speech. One hath remorse for even a little covetousness when his belly cooleth.

21. If thou wouldest be wise, provide for thine house, and love thy wife that is in thine arms. Fill her stomach, clothe her back; oil is the remedy of her limbs. Gladden her heart during thy lifetime, for she is an estate profitable unto its lord. Be not harsh, for gentleness mastereth her more

than strength. Give (?) to her that for which she sigheth and that toward which her eye looketh; so shall thou keep her in thy house. . . .

22. Satisfy thine hired servants out of such things as thou hast; it is the duty of one that hath been favoured of the God. In sooth, it is hard to satisfy hired servants. For one 1 saith, 'He is a lavish person; one knoweth not that which may come--from him.' But on the morrow he thinketh, 'We is a person of exactitude--parsimony--content therein.' And when favours have been shown unto servants, they say, "We go." Peace dwelleth not in that town wherein dwell servants that are wretched.

23. Repeat not extravagant speech, neither listen thereto; for it is the utterance of a body heated by wrath. When such speech is repeated to thee, hearken not thereto, look to the ground. Speak not regarding it, that he that is before thee may know wisdom. If thou be commanded to do a theft, bring it to pass that the command be taken off thee, for it is a thing hateful according to law. That which destroyeth a vision is the veil over it.

24. If thou wouldest be a wise man, and one sitting in council with his overlord, apply thine heart unto perfection. Silence is more profitable unto thee than abundance of speech. Consider how thou may be opposed by an expert that speaketh in council. It is a foolish thing to speak on every kind of work, for he that disputeth thy words shall put them unto proof.

25. If thou be powerful, make thyself to be honoured for knowledge and for gentleness. Speak with authority, that is, not as if following injunctions, for he that is humble--when highly placed--falleth into errors. Exalt not thine heart, that it be not brought low. Be not silent, but beware of interruption and of answering words with heat. Put it far from thee; control thyself. The wrathful heart speaketh fiery words; it darteth out at the man of peace that approacheth, stopping his path.

One that reckoneth accounts all the day passeth not an happy moment. One that gladdeneth his heart all the day provideth not for his house. The bowman hitteth the mark, as the steersman reacheth land, by diversity of aim. He that obeyeth his heart shall command.

26. Let not a prince be hindered when he is occupied; neither oppress the heart of him that is already laden. For he shall be hostile toward one

that delayeth him, but shall bare his soul unto one that loveth him. The disposal of souls is with the God, and that which He loveth is His creation. Set out, therefore, after a violent quarrel; be at peace with him that is hostile unto--thee--his opponent. It is such souls that make love to grow.

27. Instruct a noble in such things as be profitable unto him; cause that he be received among men. Let his satisfaction fall on his master, for thy provision dependeth upon his will. By reason of it thy belly shall be satisfied; thy back will be clothed thereby. Let him receive thine heart, that thine house may flourish and thine honour--if thou wish it to flourish--thereby. He shall extend thee a kindly hand. Further, he shall implant the love of thee in the bodies of thy friends. Forsooth, it is a soul loving to hearken.

28. If thou be the son of a man of the priesthood, and an envoy to conciliate the multitude. . . . speak thou without favouring one side. Let it not be said: "His conduct is that of the nobles, favouring one side in his speech." Turn thine aim toward exact judgments.

29. If thou have been gracious at a former time, having forgiven a man to guide him aright, shun him, remind him not after the first day that he hath been silent to thee---concerning it.

30. If thou be great, after being of none account, and hast gotten riches after squalour, being foremost in these in the city, and hast knowledge concerning useful matters, so that promotion is come unto thee; then swathe not thine heart in thine hoard, for thou art become the steward of the endowments of the God. Thou art not the last; another shall be thine equal, and to him shall come the like-fortune and station.

31. Bend thy back unto thy chief, thine overseer in the King's palace, for thine house dependeth upon his wealth, and thy wages in their season. How foolish is one that quarrelleth with his chief, for one liveth only while he is gracious. . . .

Plunder not the houses of tenants; neither steal the things of a friend, lest he accuse thee in thine bearing, which thrusteth back the heart. If he know of it, he will do thee an injury. Quarrelling in place of friendship is a foolish thing.

32. --Concerning unnatural sin.



33. If thou wouldest seek out the nature of a friend, ask it not of any companion of his; but pass a time with him alone, that thou injure not his affairs. Debate with him after a season; test his heart in an occasion of speech. When he hath told thee his past life, he hath made an opportunity that thou may either be ashamed for him or be familiar with him. Be not reserved with him when he openeth speech, neither answer him after a scornful manner. Withdraw not thyself from him, neither interrupt (?) him whose matter is not yet ended, whom it is possible to benefit.

34. Let thy face be bright what time thou livest. That which goeth into the storehouse must come out therefrom; and bread is to be shared. He that is grasping in entertainment shall himself have an empty belly; he that causeth strife cometh himself to sorrow. Take not such an one for thy companion. It is a man's kindly acts that are remembered of him in the years after his life.

35. Know well thy merchants; for when thine affairs are in evil case, thy good repute among thy friends is a channel (?) which is filled. It is more important than the dignities of a man; and the wealth of one passeth to another. The good repute of a man's son is a glory unto him; and a good character is for remembrance.

36. Correct chiefly; instruct conformably--therewith. Vice must be drawn out that virtue may remain. Nor is this a matter of misfortune, for one that is a gainsayer becometh a strifemaker.

37. If thou make a woman to be ashamed, wanton of heart, not known by her townfolk, to be falsely placed, be kind unto her for a space, send her not away, give her to eat. The wantonness of her heart shall esteem thy guidance.

C. If thou obey these things that I have said unto thee, all thy demeanour shall be of the best; for verily, the quality of truth is among their excellences. Set the memory of them in the mouths of the people; for their proverbs are good. Nor shall any word that hath here been set down cease out of this land for ever, but shall be made a pattern whereby princes shall speak well. They--my words--shall instruct a man how he shall speak, after he hath heard them; yea, he shall become as one skillful in obeying, excellent in speaking, after he hath heard them. Good fortune shall befall him, for he shall be of the highest rank. He shall be gracious to the end of his life; he shall be contented always. His

knowledge shall be his guide (?) into a place of security, wherein he shall prosper while on earth. The scholar shall be content in his knowledge. As to the prince, in his turn, forsooth, his heart shall be happy, his tongue made straight. And--in these proverbs--his lips shall speak, his eyes shall see, and his ears shall hear, that which is profitable for his son, so that he deal justly, void of deceit.

38. A splendid thing is the obedience of an obedient son; he cometh in and listeneth obediently.

Excellent in hearing, excellent in speaking, is every man that obeyeth what is noble, and the obedience of an obeyer is a noble thing.

Obedience is better than all things that are; it maketh good-will.

How good it is that a son should take that from his father by which he hath reached old age--obedience.

That which is desired by the God is obedience; disobedience is abhorred of the God.

Verily, it is the heart that maketh its master to obey or to disobey; for the safe and sound life of a man are his heart.

It is the obedient man that obeyeth what is said; he that loveth to obey, the same shall carry out commands.

He that obeyeth becometh one obeyed.

It is good indeed when a son obeyeth his father; and he-his father-that hath spoken hath great joy of it. Such a son shall be mild as a master, and he that heareth him shall obey him that hath spoken. He shall be comely in body and honoured by his father. His memory shall be in the mouths of the living, those upon earth, as long as they exist.

39. Let a son receive the word of his father, not being heedless of any rule of his. Instruct thy son--thus;--for the obedient man is one that is perfect in the opinion of princes. If he direct his mouth by what hath been enjoined him. watchful and obedient, thy son shall be wise, and his going seemly. Heedlessness leadeth into disobedience on the

morrow; but understanding shall establish him. As for the fool, he shall be crushed.

40. As for the fool, devoid of obedience, he doeth nothing. Knowledge he regardeth as ignorance. profitable things are hurtful things. He doeth all kinds of errors, so that he is rebuked therefor every day. He liveth in death therewith; it is his food. At chattering speech he marvelleth, as at the wisdom of princes, living in death every day. He is shunned because of his misfortunes, by reason of the multitude of afflictions that cometh upon him every day.

41. A son that hearkeneth is as a Follower of Horus. He is good after he hearkeneth; he groweth old, he reacheth honour and reverence. He repeated in like manner to his sons and daughters, so renewing the instruction of his father. Each man instructeth as did his begetter, repeating it unto his children. Let them--in turn--speak with their sons and daughters, that they may be famous in their deeds. Let that which thou speaketh implant true things and just in the life of thy children. Then the highest authority shall arrive, and sins depart--from them. And such men as see these things shall say, "Surely that man hath spoken to good purpose," and they shall do likewise; or, "But surely that man was experienced." And all people shall declare, "It is they that shall direct the multitude; dignities are not complete without them."

Take not my word away, neither add one; set not one in the place of another. Beware of opening . . . in thyself.

Be wary of speech when a learned man hearkeneth unto thee; desire to be established for good in the mouth of those that hear thee speaking. If thou have entered as an expert, speak with exact (?) lips, that thy conduct may be seemly.

42. Be thine heart overflowing; but refrain thy mouth. Let thy conduct be exact while amongst nobles, and seemly before thy lord, doing that which he hath commanded. Such a son shall speak unto them that hearken to him; moreover, his begetter shall be favoured. Apply thine heart, what time thou speakest, to saying things such that the nobles who listen declare, "How excellent is that which cometh out of his mouth!"

43. Carry out the behest of thy lord to thee. How good is the teaching of a man's father, for he hath come from him, who hath spoken of his son

while he was yet unborn; and that which is done for him--the son--is more than that which is commanded him. Forsooth, a good son is of the gift of the God; he doeth more than is enjoined on him, he doeth right, and putteth his heart into all his goings.

D. If now thou attain thy position, the body shall flourish, the King shall be content in all that thou doest, and thou shalt gather years of life not fewer than I have passed upon earth. I have gathered even fivescore and ten years of life, for the King hath bestowed upon me favours more than upon my forefathers; this because I wrought truth and justice for the King unto mine old age.

It Is Finished  
From Its Beginning To Its End  
Even As Found In Writing.

### THE INSTRUCTION OF KE'GEMNI (KE'GEMNI--I HAVE FOUND A SOUL)

1. The cautious man flourisheth, the exact one is praised; the innermost chamber openeth unto the man of silence. Wide is the seat of the man gentle of speech; but knives are prepared against one that forceth a path, that he advance not, save in due season.

2. If thou sit with a company of people, desire not the bread that thou likest; short is the time of restraining the heart, and gluttony is an abomination; therein is the quality of a beast. A handful of water quencheth the thirst, and a mouthful of melon supporteth the heart. A good thing standeth for goodness, but some small thing standeth for plenty. A base man is he that is governed by his belly; he departeth only when he is no longer able to fill full his belly in men's houses.

3. If thou sit with a glutton, eat with him, then depart (?).

If thou drink with a drunkard, accept--drink--and his heart shall be satisfied.

Refuse not meat when with a greedy man. Take that which he giveth thee; set it not on one side, thinking that it will be a courteous thing.

4. If a man be lacking in good fellowship, no speech hath any influence over him. He is sour of face toward the glad-hearted that are kindly to him; he is a grief unto his mother and his friends; and all men--cry--,"Let thy name be known; thou art silent in thy mouth when thou art addressed!"

5. Be not haughty because of thy might in the midst of thy young soldiers. Beware of making strife, for one knoweth not the things that the God will do when He punisheth.

The Vizier caused his sons and daughters to be summoned, when he had finished the rules of the conduct of men. And they marvelled when they came to him. Then he said unto them, "Hearken unto everything that is in writing in this book, even as I have said it in adding unto profitable sayings." And they cast themselves on their bellies, and they read it, even as it was in writing. And it was better in their opinion than anything in this land unto its limits.

Now they were living when His Majesty, the King of upper and lower Egypt, *Heuni*, departed, and His Majesty, the King of upper and lower Egypt, *Senforu*, was enthroned as a gracious king over the whole of this land.

Then was Ke'gemni made Governor of his city and Vizier.

## **THE INSTRUCTIONS OF AMENEMHE'ET (THE GOD AMON IS FIRST)**

Beginneth here the Instruction made by the majesty of the King of upper and lower Egypt, Sehotep'eb-Re, son of the Sun, *Amenemhe'et*, the Justified. He speaketh thus in discovering words of truth unto his son, the Lord of the World:

1. Shine forth, he saith, even as the God. Hearken to that which I say unto thee; that thou may reign over the land, that thou may govern the world, that thou may excel in goodness.

2. Let one withdraw himself from his subordinates entirely. It befalleth that mankind give their hearts unto one that causeth them fear. Mix not among them alone; fill not thine heart with a brother; know not a

trusted friend; make for thyself no familiar dependents; in these things is no satisfaction.

3. When thou liest down have a care for thy very life, since friends exist not for a man in the day of misfortunes. I gave to the beggar, and caused the orphan to live; I made him that had not to attain, even as he that had.

4. But it was the eater of my food that made insurrection against me; to whom I gave mine hands, he created disturbance thereby; they that arrayed them in my fine linen regarded me as a shadow; and it was they that anointed themselves with my spices that entered my harem.

5. My images are among the living; and my achievements are among men. But I have made an heroic story that hath not been heard; a great feat of arms that hath not been seen. Surely one fighteth for a lassoed ox that forgetteth yesterday; and good fortune is of no avail unto one that cannot perceive it.

6. It was after the evening meal, and night was come. I took for myself an hour of ease. I lay down upon my bed, for I was weary. My heart began to wander (?). I slept. And lo! weapons were brandished, and there was conference concerning me. I acted as the serpent of the desert.

7. I awoke to fight; I was alone. I found one struck down, it was the captain of the guard. Had I received quickly the arms from his hand, I had driven back the dastards by smiting around. But he was not a brave man on that night, nor could I fight alone; an occasion of prowess cometh not to one surprised. Thus was I.

8. Behold, then, vile things came to pass, for I was without thee; the courtiers knew not that I had passed on to thee--my power. I sat not with thee on the throne. Let me then, make my plans. Because I awed them not I was not unmindful of them; but mine heart bringeth not to remembrance the slackness of servants.

9. Have ever women gathered together assailants? Are assassins reared within my palace? Was the opening done by cutting through the ground? The underlings were deceived as to what they did. But misfortunes have not come in my train since my birth; nor hath there existed the equal of me as a doer of valiance.

10. I forced my way up to Elephantine, I went down unto the coast-lakes; I have stood upon the boundaries of the land, and I have seen its centre. I have set the limits of might by my might in my deeds.

11. I raised corn, I loved Nopi; the Nile begged of me every valley. In my reign none hungered; none thirsted therein. They were contented in that which I did, saying concerning me, "Every commandment is meet."

12. I overcame lions; I carried off crocodiles. I cast the Nubians under my feet; I carried off the southern Nubians; I caused the Asiatics to flee, even as hounds.

13. I have made me an house, adorned with gold, its ceilings with lapis lazuli, its walls having deep foundations. Its doors are of copper, their bolts are of bronze. It is made for everlasting; eternity is in awe of it. I know every dimension thereof, O Lord of the World!

14. There are divers devices in buildings. I know the pronouncements of men when inquiring into its beauties; but they know not that it was without thee, O my Son, Senwesert; life, safe and sound, be to thee--by thy feet do I walk; thou art after mine own heart; by thine eyes do I see; born in an hour of delight; with spirits that rendered thee praise.

15. Behold, that which I have done at the beginning, let me set it in order for thee at the end; let me be the landing-place of that which is in thine heart. All men together set the White Crown on the Offspring of the God, fixing it unto its due place. I shall begin thy praises when in the Boat of Ra. Thy kingdom hath been from primeval time; not by my doing, who have done valiant things. Raise up monuments, make beautiful thy tomb. I have fought against him whom thou knowest; for I desire not that he should be beside thy Majesty. Life safe and sound, be to thee.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE "BOOK OF THE DEAD"

THE *Book of the Dead*, the Egyptian title of which, "Pert em hru," has been variously translated "coming forth by day" and the "manifestation

day," is a great body of religious compositions compiled for the use of the dead in the other world. It is probable that the name had a significance for the Egyptians which is incapable of being rendered in any modern language, and is borne out by another of its titles--"The chapter of making perfect the Khu"--or spirit. Texts dealing with the welfare of the dead and their life in the world beyond the grave are known to have been in use among the Egyptians as early as 4000 B.C. The oldest form of the *Book of the Dead* known to us is represented in the Pyramid Texts. With the invention of mummification a more complete funerary ritual arose, based on the hope that such ceremonies as it imposed would ensure the corpse against corruption, preserve it forever, and introduce it to a beatified existence among the gods. Almost immediately prior to the dynastic era a great stimulus appears to have been given to the cult of Osiris throughout Egypt. He had now become the god of the dead *par excellence*, and his dogma taught that from the preserved corpse would spring a beautiful astral body, the future home of the spirit of the deceased. It therefore became necessary to adopt measures of the greatest precaution for the preservation of human remains.

*The generality of the texts comprised in the "'Book of the Dead" are in one form or another of much greater antiquity than the period of Mena, the first historical king of Egypt. Indeed, from internal evidence it is possible to show that many of these were revised or edited long before the copies known to us were made. Even at as early a date as 3300 B.C., the professional writers who transcribed the ancient texts appear to have been so puzzled by their contents that they hardly understood their purport. Dr. Budge states: "We are in any case justified in estimating the earliest form of the work to be contemporaneous with the foundation of the civilization which we call 'Egyptian' in the Valley of the Nile."*

#### **A "DISCOVERY" 3400 YEARS OLD**

A hieratic inscription upon the sarcophagus of Queen Khnem-nefert, wife of Mentu-hetep, a king of the eleventh dynasty, c.2500 B.C., states that a certain chapter of the *Book of the Dead* was discovered in the reign of Hesepti, the fifth king of the first dynasty, who flourished about 4266 B.C. This sarcophagus affords us two copies of the said chapter, one immediately following the other. That as early as 2500 B.C., a chapter of the *Book of the Dead* should be referred to a date almost 2000 years before that time is astounding, and the mind reels before the idea of a tradition which, during comparatively unlettered centuries, could have conserved a religious formula almost unimpaired. Thus thirty-four



centuries ago a portion of the *Book of the Dead* was regarded as extremely ancient, mysterious, and difficult of comprehension. It will be noted also that the inscription on the tomb of Queen Khnem-nefert bears out that the chapter in question was "discovered" about 4266 B.C. If it were merely discovered at that early era, what periods of remoteness lie between that epoch and the time when it was first reduced to writing? The description of the chapter on the sarcophagus of the royal lady states that "this chapter was found in the foundations beneath the Dweller in the Hennu Boat by the foreman of the builders in the time of the king of the South and North, Hesepti, whose word is truth"; and the Nebseni Papyrus says that the chapter was found in the city of Khemennu, or Hermopolis, on a block of alabaster, written in letters of lapis-lazuli, under the feet of the god. It also appears from the Turin Papyrus, which dates from the period of the twenty-sixth dynasty, that the name of the finder was Heru-ta-ta-f, the son of Cheops, who was at the time engaged in a tour of inspection of the temples. Sir Gaston Maspero is doubtful concerning the importance which should be attached to the statement regarding the chapter on the tomb of Queen Khnem-nefert, but M. Naville considers the chapter in question one of the oldest in the *Book of the Dead*.

A bas-relief of the second dynasty bears an inscription dedicating to the shade of a certain priest the formula of the "thousand loaves of bread, thousands of jugs of ale," and so forth, so common in later times. We thus see that 4000 years B.C. it was regarded as a religious duty to provide offerings of meat and drink for the dead, and there seems to be good evidence, from the nature of the formula in question, that it had become fixed and ritualistic by this period. This passage would appear to justify the text of the sarcophagus of the wife of Mentu-hetep. A few centuries later, about the time of Seneferu, c. 3766 B.C., the cult of the dead had expanded greatly from the architectural point of view, and larger and more imposing cenotaphs were provided for them. Victorious wars had brought much wealth to Egypt, and its inhabitants were better able to meet the very considerable expenditure entailed upon them by one of the most expensive cults known to the history of religion. In the reign of Men-kau-Ra a revision of certain parts of the text of the *Book of the Dead* appears to have been undertaken. The authority for this is the rubrics attached to certain chapters which state that they were found inscribed upon a block of alabaster in letters of lapis-lazuli in the time of that monarch.

We do not find a text comprising the *Book of the Dead* as a whole until the reign of Unas, 3333 B.C., whose pyramid was opened in 1881 by Sir

G. Maspero. The stone walls were covered with texts extremely difficult of decipherment, because of their archaic character and spelling, among them many from the *Book of the Dead*. Continuing his excavations at Saqqarah, Maspero made his way into the pyramid of Teta, 3300 B.C., in which he discovered inscriptions, some of which were identical with those in the pyramid of Unas, so that the existence of a fully formed *Book of the Dead* by the time of the first king of the sixth dynasty was proven. Additional texts were found in the tomb of Pepi I, 3233 B.C. From this it will be seen that before the close of the sixth dynasty five copies of a series of texts, forming the *Book of the Dead* of that period, are in evidence, and, as has been observed, there is substantial proof that its ceremonial was in vogue in the second, and probably in the first, dynasty. Its texts continued to be copied and employed until the second century of the Christian era.

It would appear that each chapter of the *Book of the Dead* had an independent origin, and it is probable that their inclusion and adoption into the body of the work were spread over many centuries. It is possible that some of the texts reflect changes in theological opinion, but each chapter stands by itself. It would seem, however, that there was a traditional order in the sequence of the chapters.

### THE THREE RECENSIONS

There were three recensions or versions of the *Book of the Dead*--the Heliopolitan, the Theban, and the Saite. The Heliopolitan Recension was edited by the priests of the College of Anu, Or On, known to the Greeks as Heliopolis, and was based upon texts not now recoverable. The Pyramids of Unas, Teta, and Pepi contain the original texts of this recension, which represent the theological system introduced by the priests of Ra. The essentials of the primitive Egyptian religion are, however, retained, the only modification in them being the introduction of the solar doctrine of Ra. In later times the priesthood of Ra were forced to acknowledge the supremacy of Osiris, and this theological defeat is visible in the more modern texts. Between the sixth and eleventh dynasties the priests of On edited a number of fresh chapters from time to time.

The Thebas Recension was much in vogue from the eighteenth to the twenty-second dynasties, and was usually written upon papyri and painted upon coffins in hieroglyphs. Each chapter was preserved

distinct from the others, but appears to have had no distinct place in the entire collection.

The Saite Recension was definitely arranged at some date prior to the twenty-sixth dynasty, and is written upon coffins and papyri, and also in hieratic and demotic script. It continued to be employed to the end of the Ptolemaic period.

As we have previously noticed, the *Book of the Dead* was for their use from the moment when they found themselves inhabitants of the other world. Magic was the very mainspring of existence in that sphere, and unless a spirit was acquainted with the formulæ which compelled the respect of the various gods and demons, and even of inanimate objects, it was helpless. The region to which the dead departed, the primitive Egyptians called Duat. They believed it to be formed of the body of Osiris. It was regarded as dark and gloomy, containing pits of fire and dreadful monsters which circled the earth, and was in its turn, bounded by a river and a lofty chain of mountains. The part of it that was nearest to Egypt was regarded as a description of mingled desert and forest, through which the soul of the deceased might not hope to struggle unless guided by some benevolent spirit who knew the paths through this country of despair. Thick darkness covered everything, and under the veil of this, the hideous inhabitants of the place practised all sorts of hostility to the newcomer, unless by the use of words of power he could prove his superiority over them. But there was one delectable part in this horrid region--the Sekhet Hetepet, the Elysian fields which contained the Sekhet Aaru, or the Field of Reeds, where dwelt the god Osiris and his company. At first he had domain over this part of the Duat alone, but gradually he succeeded in extending it over the entire country of the dead, of which he was monarch. We find also a god of the Duat named Duati, but who appears to have been more a personification of the region than anything else. Now the wish of all good men was to win to the kingdom of Osiris, and to that end they made an exhaustive study of the prayers and ritual of the *Book of the Dead*, in order that they might the more easily penetrate to the region of bliss. This they might reach by two ways--by land and by water. The path by water was no whit less dreadful than that by land, the passage of the soul being barred by streams of fire and boiling water, and the banks of the rivers navigated were populous with evil spirits.

## SELECTIONS FROM THE "BOOK OF THE DEAD"

### A HYMN TO THE SETTING SUN

*A hymn of praise to Ra when he riseth upon the horizon, and when he getteth in the land of life. Osiris, the scribe Ani saith:*

"Homage to thee, O Ra, when thou risest--as--Tem-Heru-khuti--Tem-Harmachis--Thou art adored--by me when thy beauties are before mine eyes, and--when thy--radiance--falleth--upon--my--body. Thou goest forth to thy setting in the Sektet boat with--fair--winds, and thy heart is glad; the heart of the Mater boat rejoiceith. Thou stridest over the heavens in peace, and all thy foes are cast down; the never-resting stars sing hymns of praise unto thee, and the stars which rest, and the stars which never fail glorify thee as thou sinkest to rest in the horizon of Manu, O thou who art beautiful at morn and at eve, O thou lord who livest and art established, O my lord!

"Homage to thee, O thou who art Ra when thou risest, and. Tem when thou settest--in--beauty. Thou risest and shinest on the back of thy mother--Nut,--O thou who art crowned king of the gods! Nut doeth homage unto thee, and everlasting and never-changing order embraceth thee at morn and at eve. Thou stridest over the heaven, being glad of heart, and the Lake of Testes is content--thereat--. The Sebau Fiend hath fallen to the ground; his arms and his hands have been hacked off, and the knife hath severed the joints of his body. Ra hath a fair wind; the Sektet boat goeth forth and sailing along it cometh into port. The gods of the south and of the north, of the west and of the east, praise thee, O thou divine substance, from whom all forms of life come into being. Thou sendest forth the word, and the earth is flooded with silence, O thou only One, who didst dwell in heaven before ever the earth and the mountains came into existence. O runner, O Lord, O only One, thou maker of things which are, thou hast fashioned the tongue of the company of the gods, thou hast produced whatsoever cometh forth from the waters, and thou springest up from them over the flooded land of the Lake of Horus. Let me snuff the air which cometh forth from thy nostrils, and the nostrils, and the north wind which cometh forth from thy mother--Nut--. O, make thou to be glorious my shining form--khu--, O Osiris, make thou to be divine my soul--ba--! Thou art worshipped--in--peace--or (in setting--. O Lord of the gods, thou art exalted by reason of thy wondrous works. Shine thou with the rays of light upon my body day by day,--upon me--, Osiris the scribe, the teller of the divine offerings of all the gods, the overseer of the granary of the lords of Abtu-Abydos--, the royal scribe in truth who loveth thee; Ani, victorious in peace."

## HYMN AND LITANY TO OSIRIS

(From the Papyrus of Ani, British Museum, No. 10,470, sheet 19)

"Praise unto thee, O Osiris, lord of eternity, Unnefer, Heru-khuti--Harmachis--, whose forms are manifold, and whose attributes are majestic, Ptah-Seker-Tern in Annu--Heliopolis--, the lord of the hidden place, and the creator of Het-ka-Ptah--Memphis--and of the gods--therein--, the guide of the underworld, who,--the gods--glorify when thou settest in Nut. Isis embraceth thee in peace, and she driveth away the fiends from the mouth of thy path. Thou turnest thy face upon Amentet, and thou makest the earth to shine as with refined copper. Those who have lain down, i.e., the dead--rise up to see thee, they breathe the air and they look upon thy face when the Disk riseth on its horizon; their hearts are at peace inasmuch as they behold thee, O thou who art Eternity and Everlastingness!"

### OPENING THE MOUTH OF OSIRIS

In one of the tombs of the New Stone Age was found a flint instrument which, as we know from inscriptions of the dynastic period, was used in performing the ceremony of "opening the mouth" of the dead, a fact that proves that even in the Old Stone Age a ceremony was performed on the dead body with the purpose of assisting the soul, or spirit, to acquire the faculties and powers needed by it in the other world. In this ceremony the flint instrument was thrust between the teeth of the dead man, and when these were separated his spirit form was believed. to acquire the power to eat and drink, to speak, to think, and to perform all the natural functions of the body.

The Chapter Of Opening The Mouth Of Osiris. The scribe Ani, triumphant, saith:

"May the good Ptah open my mouth, and may the god of my city loose the swathings, even the swathings which are over my mouth. Moreover, may Thoth, being filled and furnished with charms, come And loose the bandages, even the bandages of Set which fetter my mouth; and may the god Tem hurl them at those who would fetter--me--with them, and drive them back. May my mouth be opened, may my mouth be unclosed by Shu with his iron knife wherewith he opened the mouths of the gods. I am the goddess Sekhet, and I sit upon --my--place in the great wind (?) of heaven. I am the great goddess Sah who dwelleth among the Souls of Annu--Heliopolis--. Now as concerning every charm and all the words which may be spoken against me, may the

gods resist them, and may each and every one of the company of the gods withstand them."

## SOUL AND BODY

(From the Papyrus of Ani, British Museum, No. 10,470, sheet 17)

*The chapter of Causing the Soul to be United to its Body in the Underworld.  
The Osiris Ani, triumphant, saith:*

"Hail, thou god Anniu--i.e., Bringer!--Hail, thou god Pehrer--i.e., Runner--, who dwellest in thy hall!--Hail--, great God! Grant thou that my soul may come unto me from wheresoever it may be. If--it--would tarry, let then my soul be brought unto me from wherever it may be, for thou shalt find the Eye of Horns standing by thee like unto those beings who are like unto Osiris, and who

never lie down in death. Let not the Osiris Ani, triumphant, lie down in death among those who lie down in Annu, the land wherein souls are joined unto their bodies even in thousands. Let me have possession of my ba--soul--, and of my khu, and let me triumph therewith in every place wheresoever it may be.--Observe these things which--I--speak, for it hath staves with it;--observe then, O ye divine guardians of heaven, my soul--wheresoever it may be.--If it would tarry, do thou make my soul to look upon my body, for thou shalt find the Eye of Horus standing by thee like those--beings who are like unto Osiris--.

"Hail, ye gods, who tow along the boat of the lord of millions of years, who bring--it--above the underworld and who make it to travel over Nut, who make souls to enter into--their--spiritual bodies, whose hands are filled with your ropes and who clutch your weapons tight, destroy ye the Enemy; thus shall the boat of the sun be glad and the great God shall set out on his journey in peace. And behold, grant ye that the soul of Osiris Ani, triumphant, may come forth before the gods and that it may be triumphant along with you in the eastern part of the sky to follow unto the place where it was yesterday;--and that it may have--peace, peace in Amentet. May it look upon its material body, may it rest upon its spiritual body; and may its body neither perish nor suffer corruption forever."

*(These words are to be said over a soul of gold inlaid with precious stones and placed on the breast of Osiris.)*

## OF EVIL RECOLLECTIONS

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 8)

*The chapter of driving evil recollections from the mouth.* The overseer of the palace, the chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, the son of the overseer of the palace, the chancellor-in-chief, Amen-hetep, triumphant, saith:

"Hail, thou that cuttest off heads, and slitteth brows, thou being who puttest away the memory of evil things from the mouth of the Khus by means of the incantations which they have within them, look not upon me with the--same--eyes with which thou lookest upon them. Go thou round about on thy legs, and let thy face be--turned--behind thee so that thou mayest be able to see the divine slaughterers of the god Shu who are coming up behind thee to cut off thy head, and to slit thy brow by reason of the message of violence--sent--by thy lord, and to see (?) that which thou sayest. Work thou for me so that the memory of evil things shall dart from my mouth; let not my head be cut off; let not my brow be slit; and let not my mouth be shut fast by reason of the incantations which thou hast within thee, according to that which thou doest for the Khus through the incantations which they have within themselves. Get thee back and depart at the--sound of--the two speeches which the goddess Isis uttered when thou didst come to cast the recollection of evil things unto the mouth of Osiris by the will of Suti his enemy, saying, 'Let thy face be toward the privy parts, and look upon that face which cometh forth from the flame of the Eye of Horus against thee from within the Eye of Tem,' and the calamity of that night which shall consume thee. And Osiris went back, for the abomination of thee was in him; and thou didst go back, for the abomination of him is in thee. I have gone back, for the abomination of thee is in me; and thou shalt go back, for the abomination of me is in thee. Thou wouldst come unto me, but I say that thou shalt not advance to me so that I come to an end, and--I--say then to the divine slaughterers of the god Shu, 'Depart.'"

## OF RESCUE

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 6)

*The chapter of not letting the soul of Nu, triumphant, be captive in the underworld.* He saith:

"Hail, thou who art exalted!--Hail--thou who art adored! O thou mighty one of Souls, thou divine Soul, thou possessor of terrible power, who dost put the fear of thyself into the gods, thou who art crowned upon thy throne of majesty, I pray thee to make a way for the ba--soul--, and for the khu, and the khaibit--shade--of the overseer of the palace, the chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant--and let him be--provided therewith. I am a perfect khu, and I have made--my--way unto the place wherein dwell Ra and Hathor."

*(If this chapter be known--by the deceased--he shall be able to transform himself into a khu provided--with his soul and with his shade--in the underworld, and he shall never be held captive at any door in Amentet, in entering in or in coming out.)*

## OF OPENING THE TOMB

(From the Papyrus of Nebseni, British Museum, No. 9,900, sheet 6)

*The chapter of opening the tomb of the soul--and--to the shade of Osiris the scribe Nebseni, the lord of reverence, born of the lady of the house, Mut-restha, triumphant, so that he may come forth by day and have dominion over his fleet. He saith:*

"That which was shut fast hath been opened, that is to say, he that lay down in death--hath been opened--. That which was open hath been shut to my soul through the command of the Eye of Horus, which hath strengthened me and which maketh to stand fast the beauties which are upon the forehead of Ra, whose strides are long as--he--lifteth up--his--legs--in journeying--. I have made for myself a way, my members are mighty and are strong. I am Horus the avenger of his divine father. I am he who bringeth along his divine father, and who bringeth along his mother by means of his sceptre (?), And the way shall be opened unto him who hath gotten dominion over his feet, and he shall see the Great God in the Boat of Ra,--when--souls are counted therein at the bows, and when the years are also counted up. Grant that the eye of Horus, which maketh the adornments of light to be firm upon the forehead of Ra, may deliver my soul for me, and let there be darkness upon your faces, O ye who would hold fast Osiris. Oh, keep not captive my soul, Oh, keep not ward over my shade, but let a way be opened for my soul--and--and for my shade, and let--them--see the Great God in the shrine on the day of the judgment of souls, and let--them--recite the utterances of Osiris, whose habitations are hidden, to those who guard the



members of Osiris, and who keep ward over the Khus, and who hold captive the shades of the dead who would work evil against me, so that they shall--not--work evil against me. May a way for thy double--Ka--along with thee and along with--thy--soul be prepared by those who keep ward over the members of Osiris, and who hold captive the shades of the dead. Heaven shall--not--keep thee, the earth shall--not--hold thee captive, thou shalt not have thy being with the divine beings who make slaughter, but thou shalt have dominion over thy legs, and thou shalt advance to thy body straightway in the earth--and to--those who belong to the shrine and guard the members of Osiris."

### OF NOT SAILING TO THE EAST

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 6)

*The chapter of not sailing to the east in the underworld.* The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:

"Hail, phallus of Ra, who departest from thy calamity--which ariseth--through opposition (?), the cycles have been without movement for millions of years. I am stronger than the strong, I am mightier than the mighty. If I sail away or if I be snatched away to the east through the two horns," or--as others say--"if any evil and abominable thing be done unto me at the feast of the devils, the phallus of Ra shall be swallowed up,--along with--the head of Osiris. And behold me, for I journey along over the fields wherein the gods mow down those who make reply unto--their words--; now verily the two horns of the god Khepera shall be thrust aside, and verily pus shall spring into being in the eye of Tem along with corruption if I be kept in restraint, or if I have gone toward the east, or if the feast of devils be made in my presence, or if any malignant wound be inflicted upon me."

### OF BEING NIGH UNTO THOTH

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 7)

*The chapter of being nigh unto Thoth.* The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:

"I am he who sendeth forth terror into the powers of rain and thunder, and I ward off from the great divine lady the attacks of violence--I have

smitten like the god Shat--i.e., the god of slaughter--, and I have out libations of cool water like the god Ashu, and I have worked for the great divine lady--to ward off--the attacks of violence--, I have made to flourish--my--knife along with the knife which is in the hand of Thoth in the powers of rain and thunder."

## OF BEING NIGH UNTO THOTH

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheets 19 and 20)

*The chapter of being nigh unto Thoth and of giving glory unto a man in the underworld.* The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:

"I am the god Her-ab-maat--i.e., 'he that is within his eye--', and I have come to give right and truth to Ra; I have made Suti to be at peace with me by means of offerings made to the god Aker, and to the Tesgeru deities, and by--making--reverence unto Seb."

The following--words are to be recited in the Sektet boat: "--Hail,--sceptre of Anubis, I have made the four Khus who are in the train of the lord of the universe to be at peace with me, and I am the lord of the fields through their decree. I am the divine father Bah--i.e., the god of the water flood--, and I do away with the thirst of him that keepeth ward over the Lakes. Behold ye me, then, O great gods of majesty who dwell among the Souls of Annu, for I am lifted up over you. I am the god Menkh--i.e., Gracious One--who dwelleth among you. Verily I have cleansed my soul, O great god of majesty, set not before me the evil obstacles which issue from thy mouth, and let not destruction come round about me, or upon me. I have made myself clean in the Lake of making to be at peace,--and in the Lake of--weighing in the balance, and I have bathed myself in Netert-utchat, which is under the holy sycamore tree of heaven. Behold--I am--bathed,--and I have--triumphed--over--all--mine enemies--straightway who come forth and rise up against right and truth. I am right and true in earth. I, even I, have spoken (?) with my mouth--which is--the power of the Lord, the Only one, Ra the mighty, who liveth upon right and truth. Let not injury be inflicted upon me,--but let me be--clothed on the day of those who go forward (?) to every--good--thing."

## OF BRINGING A BOAT ALONG IN HEAVEN

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 9)

*The chapter of bringing along a boat in heaven.* The chancellor-in-chief, triumphant, saith:

"Hail to thee, O thou Thigh which dwelleth in the northern heaven in the Great Lake, which art seen and which dieth not. I have stood up over thee when thou didst rise like a god. I have seen thee, and I have not lain down in death; I have stood over thee, and I have risen like a god. I have cackled like a goose, and I have alighted like a hawk by the divine clouds and by the great dew. I have journeyed from the earth to heaven. The god Shu--made--me to stand up, the god of Light hath made me to be vigorous by the two sides of the ladder, and the stars which never rest set--me--on--my--way and bring--me--away from slaughter. I bring along with me the things which drive back calamities as I advance over the passage of the god Pen; thou comest, how great art thou, O god Pen! I have come from the Pool of Flame which is in the Sekhet-Sasa--i.e., the Field of Fire.--Thou livest in the Pool of Flame in Sekhet-Sasa, and I live upon the staff of the hold--god. Hail, thou god Kaa, who dost bring those things which are in the boats by the . . . I stand up in the boat and I guide myself--over--the water: I have stood up in the boat and the god hath guided me. I have stood up. I have spoken.--I am master of the--crops. I sail round about as I go forward, and the gates which are in Sekhem--Letopolis--are opened unto me, and fields are awarded unto me in the city of Unni--Hermopolis--, and laborers (?) are given unto me together with those of my own flesh and bone."

## OF PROTECTING THE BOAT OF RA

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 97)

*The chapter of protecting the boat of Ra.* "O thou that cleavest the water as thou comest forth from the stream and dost sit upon thy place in thy boat, sit thou upon thy place in thy boat as thou goest forth to thy station of yesterday, and do thou join the Osiris, the overseer of the palace, the chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, the perfect Khu, unto thy mariners, and let thy strength be his strength.

"Hail, Ra, in thy name of Ra, if thou dost pass by the eye of seven cubits, which hath a pupil of three cubits, then verily do thou strengthen the Osiris, Nu, triumphant, the perfect Khu,--let him be among--thy mariners, and let thy strength be his strength. Hail, Ra, in thy name of Ra, if thou dost pass by those who are overturned in death, then verily

do thou make the Osiris, Nu, triumphant, the perfect soul, to stand up upon his feet, and may thy strength be his strength. Hail, Ra, in thy name of Ra, if the hidden things of the underworld are opened unto thee and thou dost gratify (?) the heart of the cycle of thy gods, then verily do thou grant joy of heart unto the. chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, and let thy strength be his strength. Thy members, O Ra, are established by--this--Chapter (?)."

--This Chapter--shall be recited over a bandlet of the fine linen of kings--upon which--it hath been written with Anti, which shall be laid upon the neck of the perfect Khu on the way of the burial. If this amulet be laid upon his neck he shall do everything which he desireth to do even like the gods; and he shall join himself unto the followers of Horus; and he shall be established as a star face to face with Septet--Sothis--; and his corruptible body shall be as a god along with his kinsfolk forever; and the goddess Menqet shall make plants to germinate upon his body; and the Majesty of the God Thoth lovingly shall make the light to rest upon his corruptible body at will, even as he did for the majesty of the King of the North and of the South, the god Osiris, triumphant.

## ON GOING INTO THE BOAT OF RA

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,177, sheet 28)

*The chapter of going into the boat of Ra.* The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:

"Hail, thou Great God who art in thy boat, bring thou me into thy boat--I have come forward to thy steps--, let me be the director of thy journeyings and let me be among those who belong to thee and who are among the stars which never rest. The things which are an abomination unto thee and the things which are an abomination unto me I will not eat, that which is an abomination unto me, that which is an abomination unto me is filth and I will not eat thereof; but sepulchral offerings and holy food--will I eat--, and I shall not be overthrown thereby. I will not draw nigh unto filth with my hands, and I will not walk thereon with my sandals, because my bread--is made--of white barley, and my ale--is made--of red barley; and behold, the Sektet boat and the Atet boat have brought these things and have laid the gifts (?) of the lands upon the altar of the Souls of Annu. Hymns of praise be to thee. O Ur-arit-s, as thou travellest through heaven! Let there be food--for thee--, O dweller in the city of Teni--this--, and when the dogs gather together let me not

suffer harm. I myself have come, and I have delivered the god from the things which have been inflicted upon him, and from the grievous sickness of the body of the arm, and of the leg. I have come and I have spit upon the body, I have bound up the arm, and I have made the leg to walk.--I have--entered--the boat--and--I--sail round about by the command of Ra."

## OF KNOWING THE SOULS OF THE EAST

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 19)

*The chapter of knowing the souls of the east.* The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:

"I, even I, know the eastern gate of heaven--now its southern part is at the Lake of Kharu and its northern part is at the canal of the geese--whereout Ra cometh with the winds which make him to advance. I am he who is concerned with the tackle (?)--which is--in the divine bark, I am the sailor who ceaseth not on the boat of Ra. I, even I, know the two sycamores of turquoise between which Ra showed himself when he strideth forward over the supports of Shu toward the gate of the lord of the East through which Ra cometh forth. I, even I, know the Sektet-Aarru of Ra, the walls of which are of iron. The height of the wheat therein is five cubits, of the cars thereof two cubits, and the stalks thereof three cubits. The barley therein is--in height--seven cubits, the ears thereof are three cubits, and the stalks thereof are four cubits. And behold, the Khus, each one of whom therein is nine cubits in height, *reap is near* the divine Souls of the East. I, even I, know the divine Souls of the East, that is to say, Heru-khuti--Harmachis--, and the Calf of the goddess Khera, and the Morning Star--daily. A divine city hath been built for me, I know it, and I know the name thereof; 'Sekhet-Aarru' is its name."

## OF SEKHET-HETEPET

(From the Papyrus, of Nebseni, British Museum, No. 9,900, sheet 17)

Here begin the chapters of Sekhet-Hetepet, and the chapters Of Coming Forth By Day; of going into and of coming out from the underworld; of coming to Sekhet-Aaru; of being in Sekhet, the mighty land, the lady of winds; of having power there; of becoming a Khu there; of ploughing there; of eating there; of drinking there; of making love there; and of

doing everything even as a man doeth upon earth. Behold the scribe and artist of the Temple of Ptah, Nebseni, who saith:

"Set hath taken possession of Horus, who looked with the two eyes upon the building (?) round Sekhet-Hetepet, but I have unfettered Horus--and taken him from--Set, and Set hath opened the ways of the two eyes--which are--in heaven. Set hath cast (?) his moisture to the winds upon the soul--that hath--his day--or his eye--and who dwelleth in the city of Mert, and he hath delivered the interior of the body of Horus from the gods of Akert. Behold me now, for I make this mighty boat to travel over the Lake of Hetep, and I brought it away with might from the palace of Shu; the domain of his stars groweth young and reneweth its former strength. I have brought the boat into the lakes thereof so that I may come forth into the cities thereof, and I have sailed into their divine city Hetep. And behold, it is because I, even I, am at Peace with his seasons, and with his guidance, and with his territory, and with the company of gods who are his first born. He maketh the two divine fighters--i.e., Horus and Set--to be at peace with those who watch over the living ones whom he hath created in fair form, and he bringeth peace--with him--; he maketh the two divine fighters to be at peace with those who watch over them. He cutteth off the hair from the divine fighters, he driveth away storm from the helpless, and he keepeth harm from the Khus. Let me gain dominion within that Field, for I know it, and I have sailed among its lakes so that I might come into the cities. My mouth is strong; and I am equipped--with weapons to use--against the Khus; let them not have dominion over me. Let me be rewarded with thy fields, O thou a god Hetep; that which is thy wish, shalt thou do, O lord of the winds. May I become a khu therein, may I eat therein, may I drink therein, may I plough therein, may I reap therein, may I fight therein, may I make love therein, may my words be mighty therein, may I never be in a state of servitude therein, but may I be in authority therein. Thou hast made strong (?) the mouth and the throat (?) of the god Hetep; Qetetbu is its (?) name. He is established upon the watery supports (?) of the god Shu, and is linked unto the pleasant things of Ra. He is the divider of years, he is hidden of mouth, his mouth is silent, that which he uttereth is secret, he fulfilleth eternity and taketh possession of everlastingness of existence as Hetep, the lord Hetep. The god Horus maketh himself to be strong like unto the Hawk which is one thousand cubits in length and two thousand--cubits in width--in life; he hath equipments with him, and he journeyeth on and cometh where the seat of his heart wisheth in the Pools thereof and in the cities thereof. He was begotten in the birth-chamber of the god of the city, he hath offerings--made unto him--of the food of the god of the

city, he performeth that which is meet to do therein, and the union thereof, in the matter of everything of the birth-chamber of the divine city. When--he--setteth in life like crystal he performeth everything therein, and these things are like unto the things which are done in the Lake of double Fire, wherein there is none that rejoiceth, and wherein are all manner of evil things. The god Hetep goeth in, and cometh out, and goeth backward--in--that, Field that gathereth together all manner of things for the birth-chamber of the god of the city. When he setteth in life like crystal he performeth all manner of things therein which are like unto the things which are done in the Lake of double Fire, wherein there is none that rejoiceth, and wherein are no evil things whatsoever. -  
 -Let me--live with the god Hetep, clothed and not despoiled by the lords of the north (?) and may the lords of divine things bring food unto me; may he make me to go forward and may I come forth, and may he bring my power to me there, and may I receive it, and may my equipment be from the god Hetep. May I gain the mastery over the great and mighty word which is in my body in this my place, and by it I will remember and I will forget. Let me go forward in my journey, and let me plough. I am at peace in the divine city, and I know the waters, cities, nomes, and lakes which are in Sekhet-hetep. I exist therein, I am strong therein, I become a khu therein, I eat therein, I sow seed therein, I reap the harvest therein, I plough therein, I make love therein, I am at peace with the god Hetep therein. Behold I scatter seed therein, I sail about among its lakes and I come forward to the cities thereof, O divine Hetep. Behold my mouth is equipped with thy horns--for teeth--, grant me an overflowing supply of the food whereon the kas and khus--live--. I have passed the judgment of Shu upon him that knoweth him, so that I may go forth to the cities thereof, and may sail about among its lakes and may walk about in Sekhet-hetep; and behold, Ra is in heaven, and behold, the god Hetep is its double offering. I have come onward to its land, I have put on my girdle (?), I have come forth so that the gifts which are about to be given unto me may be given, I have made gladness for myself. I have laid hold upon my strength which the god Hetep hath greatly increased for me. O Unen-em-hetep, I have entered into thee and my soul followeth after me, and my divine food is upon both my hands, O Lady of the two lands, who establishest my word whereby I remember and forget; I would live without injury, without any injury--being done--unto me, oh, grant to me, oh, do thou grant to me, joy of heart. Make thou me to be at peace, bind thou up my sinews and muscles, and make me to receive the air. O Un (en)-em-hetep, thou Lady of the winds, I have entered into thee and I have opened--i.e., shown--my head. Ra falleth asleep, but I am awake, and there is the goddess Hast at the gate of heaven by night. Obstacles have been set

before me, but I have gathered together what he hath emitted. I am in my city. O Nut-urt, I have entered into thee and I have counted my harvest, and I go forward to Uakh. I am the bull enveloped in turquoise, the lord of the Field of the Bull, the lord of the divine speech of the goddess Septer--Sothis--at her hours. O Uakh, I have entered into thee, I have eaten my bread, I have gotten the mastery over choice pieces of the flesh of oxen and of feathered fowl, and the birds of Shu have been given unto me; I follow after the gods and--I come after--the divine kas. O Tchefet, I have entered in to thee. I array myself in apparel, and I gird myself with the sa garment of Ra; now behold,--he is--in heaven and those who dwell therein follow Ra, and--I--follow Ra in heaven. O Unen-em-hetep, lord of the two lands, I have entered into thee, and I have plunged into the lakes of Tchesert; behold me, for all filth hath departed from me. The Great God groweth therein, and behold, I have found--food therein--; I have snared feathered fowl and I feed upon the finest--of them--. O Qenqentet, I have entered into thee, and I have seen the Osiris--my father--, and I have gazed upon my mother, and I have made love. I have caught the worms and serpents, and I am delivered. And I know the name of the god who is opposite to the goddess Tchesert, and who hath straight hair and is equipped with two horns; he reapeth, and I both plough and reap. O Hast, I have entered in to thee, I have driven back those who would come to the turquoise--sky--, and I have followed the winds of the company of the gods. The Great God hath given my head unto me, and he who hath bound on me my head is the Mighty one who hath turquoise (?) eyes, namely, Ari-en-ab-f--i.e., he doeth as he pleaseth--. O Usert, I have come into thee at the head of the house wherein divine food is brought for me. O Smam, I have come into thee. My heart watcheth, my head is equipped with the white crown, I am led into celestial regions, and I make to flourish terrestrial objects, and there is joy of heart for the Bull, and for celestial beings, and for the company of the gods. I am the god who is the Bull, the lord of the gods, as he goeth forth from the turquoise--sky---. O divine nome of wheat and barley, I have come into thee, I have come forward to thee and I have taken up that which followeth me, namely the best of the libations of the company of the gods. I have tied up my boat in the celestial lakes, I have lifted up the post at which to anchor, I have recited the prescribed words with my voice, and I have ascribed praise unto the gods who dwell in Sekhet-hetep."

## OF KNOWING THE SOULS OF PE

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 18)



*Another chapter of knowing the souls of Pe.* The overseer of the palace, the chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:

--Hail, --Khat, who dwellest in Khat, in Anpet, and in the nome of Khat! --Hail,--ye goddesses of the class who dwell in the city of Pe, ye celestial lands (?), ye stars, and ye divine beings, who give cakes and ale (?), do ye know for what reason the city of Pe hath been given unto Horus? I, even I, know though ye knoweth it not. Behold Ra gave the city unto him in return for the injury in his eye, for which cause Ra said to Horus, 'Let me see what is coming to pass in thine eye,' and forthwith he looked thereat. Then Ra said to Horus, 'Look at that black pig,' and he looked, and straightway an injury was done unto his eye,--namely--, a mighty storm--took place--. Then said Horus unto Ra, 'Verily, my eye seems as if it were an eye upon which Suti had inflicted a blow';--and thus saying--he ate his heart. Then said Ra to those gods, 'Place ye him in his chamber, and he shall do well.' Now the black pig was Suti who had transformed himself into a black pig, and it was he who had aimed the blow of fire which was in the eye of Horus. Then said Ra unto those gods, 'The pig is an abominable thing unto Horus; oh, but he shall do well although the pig is an abomination unto him.' Then the company of the gods, who were among the divine followers of Horus when he existed in the form of his own child, said, 'Let sacrifice be made--to the gods--of his bulls, and of his goats, and of his pigs.' Now the father of Mesthi, Hapi, Tuamauf and Qebhsennuf is Horus, and their mother is Isis. Then said Horus to Ra, 'Give me two divine brethren in the city of Pe and two divine brethren in the city of Nekhen, who--have sprung--from my body and who shall be with me in the guise of everlasting judges, then shall the earth blossom and thunderclouds and rain be blotted out.' And the name of Horus became 'Her-uatch-f'--i.e., Prince of his emerald stone.--I, even I, know the Souls of Pe, namely, Horus, Mesthi, and Hapi."

## OF THE SWALLOW

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 10)

*The chapter of making the transformation into a swallow.* The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:

"I am a swallow, I am a swallow. I am the scorpion, the daughter of Ra. Hail, ye gods, whose scent is sweet; hail, ye gods, whose scent is sweet I --Hail--, Flame, which cometh forth from the horizon! Hail, thou who

art in the city, I have brought the Warden of his Bight therein. Oh, stretch out unto me thy hand so that I may be able to pass my days in the Pool of Double Fire, and let me advance with my message, for I have come with words to tell. Oh, open--thou--the doors to me and I will declare the things which have been seen by me. Horus hath become the divine Prince of the Boat of the Sun, and unto him hath been given the throne of his divine father Osiris, and Set, that son of Nut,--lieth--under the fetters which he had made for me. I have made a computation of what is in the city of Sekhem, I have stretched out both my hands and arms at the word (?) of Osiris, I have passed on to judgment, and I have come that--I--may speak, grant that I may pass on and declare my tidings. I enter in,--I--am-judged, and--I--come forth worthy at the gate of Neb-er-tcher. I am pure at the great place of the passage of souls, I have done away with my sins, I have put away mine offences, and I have destroyed the evil which appertained unto my members upon earth. Hail, ye divine beings who guard the doors, make ye for me a way, for, behold, I am like unto you. I have come forth by day, I have journeyed on, on my legs, and I have gained the mastery over my footsteps--before--the God of Light, I know the hidden ways and the doors of the Sekhet-Aaru, verily I, even I, have come. I have overthrown mine enemies upon earth, and yet my perishable body is in the gravel!"

If this chapter be known--by the deceased--he shall come forth by day, he shall not be turned back any gate in the underworld, and he shall make his transformation into a swallow regularly and continually.

### TRANSFORMATION INTO A LOTUS

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 11)

*The chapter of making the transformation into a lotus.* The overseer of the palace, the chancellor-in-chief, Nu, saith:

"I am the pure Lotus which springeth up from the divine splendor that belongeth to the nostrils of Ra. I have made--my way--, and I follow on seeking for him who is Horus. I am the pure one who cometh forth out of the Field."

### TRANSFORMATION INTO A LOTUS

(From the Papyrus of Paqrer--see Naville, op. cit., Bd. I, Bl. 93)

*The chapter of making the transformation into a lotus. Saith Osiris Paqrer:*

"Hail, thou lotus, thou type of the god Nefer-Temu! I am the man that knoweth you, and I know your names among--those of--the gods, the lords of the underworld, and I am one of you. Grant ye that--I--may see the gods who are the divine guides in the Tuat--underworld,--and grant ye unto me a place in the underworld near unto the lords of Amentet. Let me arrive at a habitation in the land of Tchesert, and receive me, O all ye gods, in the presence of the lords of eternity. Grant that my soul may come forth whithersoever it pleaseth, and let it not be driven away from the presence of the great company of Gods."

## TRANSFORMATION INTO PTAH

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheets 9 and 10)

*The chapter of making the transformation into Ptah, of eating cakes, and of drinking ale, and of unfettering the steps, and of becoming a living being in Annu--Heliopolis. The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:*

"I fly like a hawk, I cackle like the smen goose, and I preach upon that abode of the underworld--aat--on the festival of the great Being. That which is an abomination unto me, I have not eaten; filth is an abomination unto me and I have not eaten thereof, and that which is an abomination unto my ka hath not entered into my belly. Let me, then, live upon that which the gods and the Khus decree for me; let me live and let me have power over cakes; let me eat them before the gods and the Khus--who have a favor--unto me; let me have power over--these cakes--and let me eat of them under the--shade of the--leaves of the palm tree of the goddess Hathor, who is my divine Lady. Let the offering of the sacrifice, and the offering of cakes, and vessels of libations be made in Annu; let me clothe myself in the taau garment--which I shall receive--from the hand of the goddess Tait; let me stand up and let me sit down wheresoever I please. My head is like unto that of Ra, and--when my members are--gathered together--I am--like unto Tem; the four--sides of the domain--of Ra, and the width of the earth four times. I come forth. My tongue is like unto that of Ptah and my throne is like unto that of the goddess Hathor, and I make mention of the words of Tem, my father, with my mouth. He it is who constraineth the handmaid, the wife of Seb, and before him are bowed--all--heads, and there is fear of him. Hymns of praise are repeated for--me--by reason of--my--mighty acts, and I am decreed to be the divine Heir of

Seb, the lord of the earth, and to be the protector therein. The god Seb refresheth me, and he maketh his risings to be mine. Those who dwell in Annu bow down their heads unto me, for I am their lord and I am their bull. I am more powerful than the lord of time, and I shall enjoy the pleasures of love, and shall gain the mastery over millions of years.

## OF PERFORMING TRANSFORMATIONS

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 10)

*The chapter of performing the transformation into a hawk of gold. The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, saith:*

"I have risen, I have risen like a mighty hawk--of gold--that cometh forth from his egg; I fly and I alight like the hawk which hath a back four cubits wide, and the wings of which are Eke unto the mother-of-emerald of the south. I have come forth from the interior of the Sektet boat, and my heart hath been brought unto me from the mountain of the east. I have alighted upon the Atet boat, and those who were dwelling in their companies have been brought unto me, and they bowed low in paying homage unto me and in saluting me with cries of joy. I have risen, I have gathered myself together like the beautiful hawk of gold, which hath the head of a Bennu bird, and Ra entereth in day by day to hearken unto my words; I have taken my seat among those first-born gods of Nut. I am established, and the divine Sekhet-hetep is before me, I have eaten therein, I have become a khu therein, I have an abundance therein--as much as I desire--the god Nepra hath given to me my throat, and I have gained the mastery over that which guardeth--or belongeth to--my head."

## COMING FORTH BY DAY

(From the Papyrus of Mes-em-neter, Naville, op. cit., Bd. I, Bl. 81)

*Another chapter:*

"I am the Fire-god, the divine brother of the Fire-god, and--I am--Osiris the brother of Isis. My divine son, together with his mother Isis, hath avenged me on mine enemies. My enemies have wrought every--kind of--evil, therefore their arms, and hands, and feet, have been fettered by reason of their wickedness which they have wrought upon me. I am

Osiris, the first-born of the divine womb, the first-born of the gods, and the heir of my father Osiris-Seb (?). I am Osiris, the lord of the heads that live, mighty of breast and powerful of back, with a phallus which goeth to the remotest limits--where---men and women--live--. I am Sah--Orion--who travelleth over his domain and who journeyeth along before the stars of heaven,--which is--the belly of my mother Nut; she conceived me through her love, and she gave birth to me because it was her will to do so. I am Anpu--Anubis--on the day of the god Sepa. I am the Bull at the head of the meadow. I, even I, am Osiris who imprisoned his father together with his mother on the day of making the great slaughter; now--his--father is Seb, and--his--mother is Nut. I am Horus, the first-born of Ra of the risings. I am Anpu--Anubis--on the day of--the god Sepa. I, even I, am the lord Tem. I am Osiris. Hail, thou divine first-born, who dost enter and dost speak before the divine Scribe and Doorkeeper of Osiris, grant that I may come. I have become a khu, I have been judged, I have become a divine being, I have come, and I have avenged mine own body. I have taken up my seat by the divine birth-chamber of Osiris, and I have destroyed the sickness and suffering which were there. I have become mighty, and I have become a divine being by the side of the birth-chamber of Osiris, I am brought forth with him, I renew my youth, I take possession of my two thighs which are in the place where is Osiris, and I open the mouth of the gods therewith, I take my seat by his side, and Thoth cometh forth, and--I am--strengthened in heart with thousands of cakes upon the altars of my divine father, and with my beasts, and with my cattle, and with my red feathered fowl, and with my oxen, and with my geese, and with my ducks, for Horus my Chieftain, and with the offerings which I make to Thoth, and with the sacrifices which I offer up to An-heri-ertaitsa."

## THE CHAPTER OF BRINGING CHARMS TO OSIRIS

(From the Papyrus of Ani, British Museum, No. 10,470, sheet 15)

*The chapter of bringing charms unto Osiris Ani--in the underworld. He saith:*

"I am Tem-Khepera, who brought himself into being upon the thigh of his divine mother. Those who are in Nu--i.e., the sky--are made wolves, and those who are among the sovereign princes are become hyenas. Behold, I gather together the charm--from every place where--it is, and from every man with whom it is, swifter than greyhounds and quicker than light. Hail, thou who towest along the Makhent boat of Ra, the

stays of thy sails and of thy rudder are taut in the wind as thou sailest up the Pool of Fire in the underworld. Behold, thou gatherest together the charm from every place where it is, and from every man with whom it is, swifter than greyhounds and quicker than light--the charm--which created the forms of being from the . . . mother, and which either created the gods or maketh them silent, and which giveth the heat of fire unto the gods. Behold, the charm is given unto me, from wherever it is--and from him with whom it is--, swifter than greyhounds and quicker than light," or--as others say--"quicker than a shadow."

### THE CHAPTER OF MEMORY

(From the Papyrus of Nu, British Museum, No. 10,477, sheet 5)

*The chapter of making a man to possess memory in the underworld. The chancellor-in-chief, Nu, triumphant, the overseer of the palace, the son of the chief chancellor Amen-hetep, saith:*

"May my name be given to me in the Great House, and may I remember my name in the House of Fire on the night of counting the years and of telling the number of the months. I am with the Divine One, and I sit on the eastern side of heaven. If any god whatsoever should advance unto me, let me be able to proclaim his name forthwith."

### THE CHAPTER OF GIVING A HEART TO OSIRIS

(From the Papyrus of Ani, British Museum, No. 10,470, sheet 15)

*The chapter of giving a heart to Osiris Ani in the underworld. He saith:*

"May my heart--ah--be with me in the House of Hearts! May my heart--hat--be with me in the House of Hearts! May my heart be with me, and may it rest there,--or--I shall not eat of the cakes of Osiris on the eastern side of the Lake of Flowers, neither shall I have a boat wherein to go down the Nile, nor another wherein to go up, nor shall I be able to sail down the Nile with thee. May my mouth--be given--to me that I may speak therewith, and my two legs to walk therewith, and my two hands and arms to overthrow my foe. May the doors of heaven be opened unto me; may Seb, the Prince of the gods, open wide his two jaws unto me, may he open my two eyes which are blindfolded; may he cause me to stretch apart my two legs which are bound together; and may Anpu-

Anubis--make my thighs firm so that I may stand upon them. May the goddess Sekhet make me to rise so that I may ascend unto heaven, and may that be done which I command in the House of ka--double--of Ptah--i.e., Memphis--. I understand with my heart. I have gained the mastery over my heart, I have gained the mastery over my two hands, I have gained the mastery over my legs, I have gained the power to do whatsoever my ka--double--pleaseth. My soul shall not be fettered to my body at the gates of the underworld; but I shall enter in peace and I shall come forth in peace."

### LITANY

"Homage to thee,--O Lord of--starry deities in Annu, and of heavenly things in Kher-aba; thou god Unti, who art more glorious than the gods who are hidden in Annu; O grant thou unto me a path wherein I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

"Homage to thee, O An in Antes, (?) Heru-khuti--Harmachis--, with long strides thou stridest over heaven, O Heru-khuti. O grant thou unto me a path whereon I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

"Homage to thee, O Soul of everlastingness, thou Soul who dwellest in Tattu, Unnefer, son of Nut; thou art lord of Akert. O grant thou unto me a path whereon I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

"Homage to thee in thy dominion over Tattu; the Ureret crown is established upon thy head; thou art the One who maketh the strength which protecteth himself, and thou dwellest in peace in Tattu. O grant thou unto me a path whereon I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

"Homage to thee, O lord of the Acacia tree, the Seker boat is set upon its sledge; thou turnest back the Fiend, the worker of evil, and thou causest the Utchat to rest upon its seat. Oh, grant thou unto me a path whereon I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

"Homage to thee, O thou art mighty in thine hour, thou great and mighty Prince, dweller in An-rut-f, lord of eternity and creator of everlastingness, thou art the lord of Suten-henen--Heracleopolis Magna--. Oh, grant thou unto me a path whereon I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

"Homage to thee, O thou who retest upon Right and Truth, thou art the lord of Abtu-Abydos--, and thy limbs are joined unto Tatches-ertet; thou art he to whom fraud and guile are hateful. Oh, grant thou unto me a path whereon I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

"Homage to thee, O thou who art within thy boat, thou bringest Hapi--i.e., the Nile--forth from his course; the light shineth upon thy body and thou art the dweller in Nekhen. Oh, grant thou unto me a path whereon I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

"Homage to thee, O creator of the gods, thou King of the North and of the South, O Osiris, victorious one, ruler of the world in thy gracious seasons, thou art the lord of the celestial world. Oh, grant thou unto me a path whereon I may pass in peace, for I am just and true! I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit."

## HYMN TO RA

(From the Papyrus of Ani, British Museum, No. 10,470, sheet 20)

*A hymn of praise to Ra when he riseth in the eastern part of heaven. Those who are in his train rejoice, and lo! Osiris Ani, victorious saith:*

"Hail thou Disk, thou lord of rays, who risest on the horizon day by day! Shine thou with thy beams of light upon the face of Osiris Ani, who is victorious; for he singeth hymns of praise unto thee at dawn, and he maketh thee to set at eventide with words of adoration. May the soul of Osiris Ani, the triumphant one, come forth with thee into heaven, may he go forth in the Mater boat. May he come into port in the Sekter boat, and may he cleave his path among the never-resting stars in the heavens."



## CHAPTER V

### HERMES TRISMEGISTUS

HERMES TRISMEGISTUS, "the thrice greatest Hermes." The name given by the Greeks to the Egyptian god Thoth or Tehuti, the god of wisdom, learning, and literature. Thoth is alluded to in later Egyptian writings as "twice very great" and even as "five times very great" in some demotic or popular scripts.--ca. third century B.C. To him was attributed as "scribe of the gods" the authorship of all sacred books which were thus called "Hermetic" by the Greeks. These, according to Clemens Alexandrinus, were forty-two in number and were subdivided into six portions, of which the first dealt with priestly education, the second with temple ritual, and the third with geographical matter. The fourth division treated of astrology, the fifth of hymns in honor of the gods and a text-book for the guidance of Kings, while the sixth was medical. It is unlikely that these books were all the work of one individual, and it is more probable that they represent the accumulated wisdom of Egypt, attributed in the course of ages to the great god of wisdom.

As "scribe of the gods" Thoth was also the author of all strictly sacred writing. Hence by a convenient fiction the name of Hermes was placed at the head of an extensive cycle of mystic literature, produced in post-Christian times. Most of this Hermetic or Trismegistic literature has perished, but all that remains of it has been gathered and translated into English. It includes the "Poimandres"--virgin of the world--, "the Perfect Sermon," or the "Asclepius" excerpts by Stobaeus, and fragments from the church fathers and from the philosophers, Zosimus and Fulgentius. Hitherto these writings have been neglected by theologians, who have dismissed them as the offspring of third century Neo-Platonism. According to the generally accepted view they were eclectic compilations, combining neo-Platonic philosophy, Philonic Judaism and Kabalistic theosophy in an attempt to supply a philosophic substitute for Christianity. The many Christian elements to be found in these mystic scriptures were ascribed to plagiarism. By an examination of early mystery writings and traditions it has been proved with some degree of certainty that the main source of Trismegistic Tractates is the wisdom of Egypt, and that they "go back in an unbroken tradition of type and form and context to the earliest Ptolemaic times."

The "Poimandres," on which all later Trismegistic literature is based, must, at least in its original form, be placed not later than the first century. The charge of plagiarism from Christian writings, therefore, falls to the ground. If it can be proved that the "Poimandres" belongs to the first century, we have in it a valuable document in determining the environment and development of Christian origins.

Mr. G. R. S. Mead, author of "Thrice Greatest Hermes," says in an illuminating passage: "The more one studies the best of these mystical sermons, casting aside all prejudices, and trying to feel and think with the writers, the more one is conscious of approaching the threshold of what may well be believed to have been the true adytum. of the best in the mystery traditions of antiquity, Innumerable are the hints of the greatneses and immensities lying beyond that threshold--among other precious things the vision of the key to Egypt's wisdom, the interpretation of apocalypse by the light the sun-clear epopteia of the intelligible cosmos."

## HERMETIC WRITINGS

*Apparently the earliest of the Hermetic class of writings is the Kore Kosmou or Virgin of the World.*

It has more connection with the earlier mythology of Egypt than the other works, Isis and Horus are the teacher and taught; Thoth, Imhotep, and Ptah are all named; the mission of Osiris and Isis is recounted; the divine parentage of the kings is described, and Egypt is the happy centre of all the world. As such Egyptian detail is absent from works of the first or second century B.C., it would be reasonable to put this earlier; and the Egyptian forms of the names of the gods imply earlier translation than that of the other works. What seems to stamp the period is an allusion in sect. 48, where the central land of Egypt is described as "free from trouble, ever it brings forth, adorns and educates, and only with such weapons wars--on men--and wins the victory, and with consummate skill, like a good satrap bestows the fruit of its own victory upon the vanquished." It would seem impossible for the allusion to the government of a satrap to be preferred by an Egyptian, except under the Persian dominion. And such a reference to wise government could not occur in the very troubled years of plunder and confusion, 342 to 332 B.C. We must go back to the days of wise and righteous rule of Persia, 525-405 B.C., to reach a possible comparison with the wise satrap. We know so little of the details of the Persian

dealings with Egypt, that the allusion to a generous satrap can hardly be fixed in history. But it is probable that the reference is to the events of the conquest by Cambyses in 525, followed by the enlightened reign of Darius, beginning in 521, soon after which, about 518, the satrap Aryandes attacked Cyrene, and brought back much spoil of captives and plunder into Egypt. Thus within a few years of the conquest of Egypt, a good satrap bestowed the fruits of victory upon the vanquished. This would throw the *Kore Kosmou* back to about 510 B.C., but in any case we must, by this allusion to a satrap, date it with a century after that. Thus it would precede all the Apocryphal Wisdom literature of Alexandria, and indeed there is no trace of Jewish influence in the ideas or language.

### THE SUBJECT OF THE WORK IS THE ORIGIN OF ALL THINGS

Beginning with the principle "that every nature which lies underneath should be co-ordered and fulfilled by those that lie above," this is carried out by the dive production of heavenly souls, and next of sacred animals. The souls rebel and are then embodied as men, and the gods form the world for them. The evils of man are righted by the Divine Efflux, Osiris and Isis, and the nature of man is explained. Such is the argument of the work, obscured by magnificent images and phrases. The various beliefs which are stated or implied give a body of ideas, which we can thus date as underlying the rest of the literature. The numbers here refer to Mead's sections.

In (1) we read of the divine beauty of the rich majesty of Night, before God was known, and of the ordered motions and hidden influences of the Sun and planets bestowing order on the things below. (2) Beside the Creator there were immortal gods, into whom he breathes love and pours radiance, that they might seek and desire to find and win success. (3) Among the gods were Hermes Tat his son and heir, afterwards came Asklepios-Imhotep according to the will of Ptah who is Hephaistos. Their inquiry was ordained by Fore-knowledge of Providence, queen of all; thus fate is over the gods. (5) Hermes binds his holy books with spells, until they shall be found by souls. (6) When the Kosmos was to awake, God said, "Nature, arise!" and from His word came a perfectly beautiful feminine principle, at whom the gods marvelled. This seems to be the *Kore Kosmou* or Virgin of the Kosmos, after whom this writing is named. By the help of Toil she made her daughter Invention, who was to rule over all that had been made. These, however, take no further action, but (8) the Breath of God and Conscious Fire blended with unconscious matter is (9) the material for myriads of souls (10) of

sixty different degrees. (11) These kept the circulation of Nature in motion, but are threatened if they transgress. (12) God then makes the sacred animals of water and of earth, and gives some matter to the souls to make men in their own nature. The souls make birds of the lightest stuff, quadrupeds of the stiffer plasm, then fish, and of the cold and heavy residue creeping things. But the whole of this existence is entirely before and outside of the present world of men.

The second great stage is the rebellion of souls and its results. (15) Proud of their work, the souls armed themselves, and were forever moving; God therefore resolved to embody them as men. (16) The gods are called to promise their gifts to the new world of men. (17) The sun will shine; the moon give fear, silence, sleep and memory; Kronos will give justice and necessity; Zeus will give fortune, hope, and peace; Ares gives struggle, wrath and strife; Aphrodite gives despair, desire, bliss, and laughter; and Hermes gives prudence, wisdom, persuasiveness, and truth, and will work with invention. This idea of the gods endowing men is seen in the tale of the creation of the wife of Bata, and is therefore Egyptian, but the details are Greek in origin. It is possible that sect. 17 is a later Greek expansion inserted in the Egyptian text; otherwise we must regard the whole as a Græco-Egyptian philosophy, for the Egyptian would not admit Greek elements at this date into a religious myth.

(18) Hermes then made the bodies, with too much water added that they should not be powerful. The souls are thus en fleshed by God, and wail at their fate. (19) The history of this was confided by Hermes to Kneph, and by him told to Isis, who now tells Horus. (20,21). The wail of imprisoned souls is (22) answered by God that if they are sinless they shall dwell in the fields of Heaven--fields of Aalu--, if blameable then on earth, if they improve they shall regain Heaven, but if they sin worse then they shall become animals. Here Metempsychosis is fully stated, as in Plato; but it is not in the Egyptian form, and the Indian influence appears already at work. (23) Then all receive breath, and the reward of the final dissolution of the body is a return to the happiness of their first state. The more righteous, upon the threshold of the divine change, shall be righteous kings, genuine philosophers, founders of states, lawgivers, real seers, true herb-knowers, prophets of the gods, skillful musicians, astronomers, augurers and sacrificers. (24) Others lower shall be eagles, lions, dragons and dolphins.

(25) Then a mighty spirit rises from the earth, and as the souls were entering their plasms he protests against making such daring and (26)

enquiring beings, and (27) prays that they may have pain, cares, struggles, and illness to keep them down. This conception seems quite un-Egyptian, and much more of the Pandora type. (28) Hermes agrees to impose Fate upon them. (29) God then assembled the gods who are free from all decay and who regulate the mighty Aeon--the only æonic reference here--to join with him in making the Heaven, earth, and sun. All previous creations appear to have been pre-sensuous, the visible world only now appearing. (31) Then the souls cause such impious turmoil, newly shut in prison, that (32) Fire complains that it is turned from sacrificial rites with sweet-smelling vapours, to burn up flesh--this point is strongly Indian, as implying that no flesh was sacrificed, but only spices--; (33) Air complains that it is polluted with dead bodies, Water complains that rivers wash the hands of murderers and receive the slain; and (34) Earth complains that it is dishonoured by the corruption of their carcases. (35) God remedies this condition by sending another efflux of His nature. (36) Osiris and Isis. They filled life full of life, stopped slaughter, hallowed shrines, gave laws, food, and shelter, set up courts of law, filled the world with justice, and introduced the witness of an oath. They also taught embalming, and the doctrine of the soul passing out in a swoon--which might result in death--taught about daimons, and engraved the teaching, were authors of arts, sciences, and laws, established the sacred rites, the grade of prophets, and magic, philosophy, and medicine. This is far earlier than the account of Osiris by Plutarch, and agrees with that. (38) Then Osiris and Isis, having fulfilled their mission, were demanded back by those who dwell in Heaven, and were permitted to return.

### **(39) HORUS DEMANDS HOW ROYAL SOULS ARE BORN**

Isis replies that in Heaven the gods dwell with the Architect of all, in the Aether are the stars and the sun, in the Air are souls and the moon, and on Earth are men and living things. (40) The king is the last of gods but first of men, divorced from his godship while on earth; his soul descends from a region above that of other souls. (41) Those who have lived a blameless life and are about to be changed into gods, become kings that they may train for godship; or those souls who are already gods, but have slightly erred, are born as kings. (42) Dispositions of kings depend upon their angels and daimons who attend them. (43) The birth of noble souls is because they descend from a more glorious place--agreeing with the idea of sixty grades of souls--. (44) Sex is a thing of bodies not of souls. (46) The inhabited earth is like a human being lying face up, (47) at the south is its head, its feet at the north; on the right to the east are fighters, on the left to the west men fight with the left hand,

those to the north excel in legs and feet. Egypt is the heart, its men gifted with intelligence and filled with wisdom. (48) The Nile flows from the south on breaking of the frost; east and west is burnt by the rising and setting sun, and the north congealed. Hence Egypt alone is happy. (49, 50) Souls are constrained differently by the four elements.

The most essential notions that we see here are creation by the word, the gods acting under the command of a supreme God, the function of created souls to keep nature circulating, the body a prison of the soul, the heavenly types of animals preceding the earthly creation, and the mission of gods on earth. Besides the Egyptian ideas already mentioned, Greek influence is seen in the characters of gods and in the episode of the earth spirit, and probably Indian influence in the Metempsychosis and the fire-sacrifice of spices, as by Apollonios. There is throughout this cosmology a vigorous and eventful chain of thought, entirely different to the maundering of later writers.

Closely linked with the Kore Kosmou is the sermon of Isis to Horus. It is slightly less Egyptian, writing of Hephaistos and Ptah, classing Horus with the mighty gods, and being rather less concrete. It may then be a rather later continuation, as it closely joins on in subject to the close of the Kore Kosmou. The ideas of this sermon are that the souls of men and animals are all alike, and Metempsychosis is assumed between human and animal bodies; the soul is individual, the work of God's hands and mind; its congress with the body is a concord wrought by God's necessity; at death it returns to its proper region. The reign of souls is between the moon and earth, for above the moon are the gods and stars and providence; the souls pass through air and wind without friction; their reign is divided into the four quarters of earth, higher the eight winds, higher sixteen spaces of subtler air, and highest thirty-two spaces of subtlest air; these are called zones, firmaments, or strata. The kingly souls occupy the highest, and so in order down to the base souls the lowest. There is a warder of souls, and a conductor to and from the bodies. Bodies are a blend of the four elements, each affecting the character.

## THE VIRGIN OF THE WORLD

*"From Thrice Greatest Hermes' sacred book 'The Virgin of the World.'"*

1. So speaking Isis doth pour forth for Horus the sweet draught--the first--of deathless which souls have custom to receive from gods, and thus begins her holiest discourse--logos--.

Seeing that, Son Horus, Heaven, adorned with many a wreath--of starry crowns--, is set o'er every nature of--all--things beneath, and that nowhere it lacketh aught of anything which the whole cosmos now doth hold,--in every way it needs must be that every nature which lies underneath, should be co-ordered and full-filled by those that lie above; for things below cannot of course give order to the ordering above.

It needs must, therefore, be the less should give place to the greater mysteries. The ordinance of the sublimer things transcends the lower; it is both sure in every way and falleth 'neath no mortal's thought. Wherefore the--mysteries--below did sign, fearing the wondrous beauty and the everlasting durance of the ones above.

'Twas worth the gazing and the pains to see Heaven's beauty, beauty that seemed like God,--God who was yet unknown, and the rich majesty of night, who weaves her web with rapid light, though it be less than sun's, and of the other mysteries in turn that move in Heaven, with ordered motions and with periods of times, with certain hidden influences bestowing order on the things below and co-increasing them.

2. Thus fear succeeded fear, and searching search incessant, and for so long as the Creator of the universals willed, did ignorance retain its grip on all. But when He judged it fit to manifest Him who He is, He breathed into the Gods and Loves, and freely poured the splendor which He had within His heart, into their minds, in ever greater and still greater measure; that firstly they might have the wish to seek, next they might yearn to find, and finally have power to win success as well. But this, my Horus, wonder-worthy son, could never have been done had that seed been subject to death, for that as yet had no existence, but only with a soul that could vibrate responsive to the mysteries of Heaven.

3. Such was all-knowing Hermes, who saw all things, and seeing understood, and understanding had the power both to disclose and to give explanation. For what he knew, he graved on stone; yet though he graved them onto stone he hid them mostly, keeping sure silence though in speech, that every younger age of cosmic time might seek for

them. And thus, with charge unto his kinsmen of the Gods to keep sure watch, he mounted to the stars.

To him succeeded Tat, who was at once his son and heir unto these knowledges; and not long afterwards Asclepius-Imuth, according to the will of Ptah who is Hephæstus, and all the rest who were to make enquiry of the faithful certitude of heavenly contemplation, as foreknowledge willed, foreknowledge queen of all.

4. Hermes, however, made explanation to surrounding--space--, how that not even to his son--because of the yet newness of his youth--had he been able to hand on the Perfect Vision. But when the sun did rise for me, and with all-seeing eyes I gazed upon the hidden--mysteries--of that new dawn, and contemplated them, slowly there came to me--but it was sure--conviction that the sacred symbols of the cosmic elements were hid away hard by the secrets of Osiris.

5. --Hermes--, ere he returned to Heaven, invoked a spell on them, and spake these words.--For 'tis not meet, my son, that I should leave this proclamation ineffectual, but--rather--should speak forth what words--our--Hermes uttered when he hid his books away. Thus then he said:

"O holy books, who have been made by my immortal hands, by incorruption's magic spells. . . . free from decay and incorrupt from time! Become unseeable, for every one whose foot shall tread the plains of this--our--land, until old Heaven doth bring forth meet instruments for you, whom the Creator shall call souls."

Thus spake he, and, laying spells on them by means of his own works, he shuts them safe away in their own zones. And long enough the time has been since they were hid away.

6. And Nature, O my son, was barren, till they who then were under orders to patrol the Heaven, approaching to the God of all, their King, reported on the lethargy of things. The time was come for cosmos to awake, and this was no one's task but His alone.

"We pray Thee, then," they said, "direct Thy thought to things which now exist and to what things the future needs."



7. When they spake thus, God smiled and said: "Nature, arise!" And from His word there came a marvel, feminine, possessed of perfect beauty, gazing at which the Gods stood all-amazed. And God the Forefather, with name of Nature, honoured her, and bade her be prolific.

Then gazing fixedly on the surrounding space, He spake these words as well: "Let Heaven be filled with all things full, and Air, and Æther too!" God spake and it was so. And Nature with herself communing knew she must not disregard the Sire's command; so with the help of Toil she made a daughter fair, whom she did call Invention. And on her God bestowed the gift of being, and with His gift He set apart all them that had been so-far made, filled them with mysteries, and to Invention gave the power of ruling them.

8. But He, no longer willing that the world above should be inert, but think good to fill it full of breaths, so that its parts should not remain immotive and inert, He thus began on these with use of holy arts as proper for the bringing forth of His own special work.

For taking breath from His own breath and blending this with knowing Fire, He mingled them with certain other substances which have no power to know; and having made the two--either with other one, with certain hidden words of power, He thus set all the mixture going thoroughly; until out of the compost smiled a substance, as it were, far subtler, purer far, and more translucent than the things from which it came; it was so clear that no one but the artist could detect it.

9. And since it neither thawed when fire was set unto it--for it was made of fire--, nor yet did freeze when it had once been properly produced--for it was made of breath--, but it kept its mixture's composition a certain special kind, peculiar to itself, of special type and special blend,--which composition, you must know, God called psychosis, after the more auspicious meaning of the name and from the similarity of its behaviour--it was from this coagulate He fashioned souls enough in myriads, moulding with order and with measure the efflorescent product of the mixture for what He willed, with skilled experience and fitting reason, so that they should not be compelled to differ any way one from another.

10. For, you must know the efflorescence that exhaled out of the movement God induced, was not like to itself. For that its first florescence was greater, fuller, every way more pure, than was its

second; its second was far second to the first, but greater far than this was its third. And thus the total number of degrees reached up to sixty. In spite of this, in laying down the law, He ordered it that all should be eternal, as though from out one essence, the forms of which Himself alone could bring to their completion.

11. Moreover, He appointed for them limits and reservations in the height of upper Nature, that they might keep the cylinder a-whirl in proper order and economy and--thus--might please their Sire. And so in that all-fairest station of the Æther He summoned unto Him the natures of all things that had as yet been made, and spake these words:

"O Souls, ye children fair of Mine own breath and My solicitude, whom I have now with My own hands brought to successful birth and consecrate to My own world, give ear unto these words of Mine as unto laws, and meddle not with any other space but that which is appointed for you by My will.

"For you, if ye keep steadfast, the Heaven, with the star-order, and thrones I have ordained fulfilled with virtue, shall stay as now they are for you; but if ye shall in any way attempt some innovation contrary to My decrees, I swear to you by My most holy breath, and by this mixture out of which I brought you into being, and by these hands of Mine which gave you life, that I will speedily devise for you a bond and punishments."

12. And having said these words, the God, who is my Lord, mixed the remaining cognate elements --water and earth--together, and, as before, invoking on them certain occult words, words of great power though not so potent as the first, He set them moving rapidly, and breathed into the mixture power of life; and taking the coagulate--which like the other floated to the top--, when it had been well steeped and had become consistent, He modelled out of it those of the--sacred animals possessing forms like unto men's.

The mixtures' residue He gave unto those souls that had gone in advance and had been summoned to the lands of gods, to regions near the stars, and to the--choir of--holy daimons. He said:

13. "My sons, ye children of My Nature, fashion things! Take ye the residue of what My art hath made, and let each fashion something

which shall bear resemblance to his own nature. These will I further give to you as models."

He took and set in order fair and fine, agreeably to the motions of the souls, the world of sacred animals, appending as it were to those resembling men those which came next in order, and on these types of lives He did bestow the all devising powers and all-contriving procreative breath of all the things which were for ever generally to be.

And He withdrew, with promises to join unto the visible productions of their hands breath that cannot be seen, and essence of engendering its like to each, so that they might give birth to others like themselves. And these are under no necessity to do aught else than what they did at first.

14. --And Horus asked--:

What did the souls do, Mother, then?

And Isis said:

Taking the blend of matter, Horus, my son, they first looked at the Father's mixture and adored it, and tried to find out whence it was composed; but this was not an easy thing for them to know.

They then began to fear lest they should fall beneath the Father's wrath for trying to find out, and so they set to work to do what they were bid.

Thereon, out of the upper stuff which had its topmost layer superfluously light, they formed the race of birds; while they were doing this the mixture had become half hardened, and by this time had taken on a firm consistency--thereon they fashioned out the race of things which have four feet--next they did fashion forth--the race of fish--less light and needing a moist substance of a different kind to swim in; and as the residue was of a cold and heavy nature, from it the Souls devised the race of creeping things.

15. They then, my son, as though they had done something grand, with overbusy daring armed themselves, and acted contrary to the commands they had received; and forthwith they began to overstep their proper limits and their reservations, and would no longer stay in

the same place, but were forever moving, and thought that being ever stationed in one place was death.

That they would do this thing, however, O my son--as Hermes says when he speaks unto me--, had not escaped the eye of Him who is the God and Lord of universal things; and He searched out a punishment and bond, the which they now in misery endure.

Thus was it that the Sovereign King of all resolved to fabricate with art the human frame, in order that in it the race of souls throughout might be chastised.

16. "Then sending for me," Hermes says, "He spake: 'Soul of My Soul, and holy mind of My own Mind, up to what point, the nature of the things beneath, shall be seen in the gloom? How long shall what has up to now been made remain inactive and be destitute of praise? Bring hither to Me now, My son, all of the Gods in heaven,' said God"--as Hermes saith.

And when they came obedient to His command,--"Look down," said He, "upon the earth, and all beneath." And they forthwith both looked and understood the Sovereign's will. And when He spake to them on human kind's behalf, they--all--agreed to furnish those who were to be, with whatsoever thing they each could best provide.

17. Sun said: "I'll shine unto my full." Moon promised to pour light upon the after-the-sun course, and said she had already given birth to fear and silence, and also sleep, and memory--a thing that would turn out to be most useful to them.

Cronus announced himself already sire of justice and necessity.

Zeus said: "So that the race which is to be may not forever fight, already for them have I made fortune, and hope and peace."

Ares declared he had become already sire of struggle, wrath, and strife.

Nor yet did Aphrodite hesitate; she also said: "I'll join to them desire, my Lord, and bliss, and laughter--too--, so that our kindred souls, in working out their very grievous condemnation, may not exhaust their punishment unto the full."

Full pleased were all, my son, at Aphrodite's words.

"And for my part," said Hermes, "I will make men's nature well endowed; I will devote to them prudence and wisdom, persuasiveness and truth, and never will I cease from congress with invention, but ever will I benefit the mortal life of men born underneath my types of life. For that the types our Father and Creator hath set apart for me, are types of wisdom and intelligence, and more than ever--is this so--what time the motion of the stars set over them doth have the natural power of each consonant with itself."

18. And God, the Master of the universe, rejoiced on hearing this, and ordered that the race of men should be.

"I," Hermes says, "was seeking for the stuff which had to be employed, and calling on the Monarch for His aid. And He gave order to the souls to give the mixture's residue; and taking it I found it utterly dried up.

"Thereon, in mixing it, I used more water far than was required to bring the matter back unto its former state, so that the plasm was in every way relaxable, and weak and powerless, in order that it might not in addition to its natural sagacity, be full of power as well.

"I moulded it, and it was fair; and I rejoiced at seeing mine own work, and from below I called upon the Monarch to behold. And He did look on it, and was rejoiced, and ordered that the souls should be en fleshed.

"Then were they first plunged in deep gloom, and, learning that they were condemned, began to wail. I was myself amazed at the souls' utterances."

19. Now give good heed, son Horus, for thou art being told the mystic spectacle which Kamephis, our forefather, was privileged to hear from Hermes, record-writer of all deeds, and I from Kamephis, most ancient of--us--all, when he did honour me with the black--rite--that gives perfection; hear thou it now from me.

For when, O wondrous Sun of mighty fame, they were about to be shut in their prisons, some simply uttered wails and groans--in just the selfsame way as beasts that once have been a liberty, when torn from their accustomed haunts they love so well, will be bad slaves, will fight

and make revolt, and be in no agreement with their masters; nay more, if circumstances should serve, will even do to death those that oppress them.

Others with louder outcry hissed like snakes; another shrieked shrilly, and ere he spake shed many tears, and, turning up and down what things served him as eyes, he said:

20. "O Heaven, thou source of our begetting, O Æther, air, O hands and holy breath of God our Monarch, O ye most brilliant stars, eyes of the gods, O tireless light of sun and moon, co-nurslings of our origin,--reft from (you) all we suffer piteously.

"And this the more, in that from spacious realms of light, from out--thy--holy envelope and wealthy dome, and from the blessed government we shared with gods, we shall be thus shut down into these honourless and lowly quarters.

"What is the so unseemly thing we miserables have done? What--crime--deserves these punishments? How many sins await us wretched ones? How many are the things we have to do in this our hopeless plight, necessities to furnish for this watery frame that is soon dissolved?

21. "For that no longer shall our eyes behold the souls of God; when through such watery spheres as these we see our own forefather Heaven grown small and tiny, we shall dissolve in signs,--nay, there'll be times we shall not see at all, for sentence hath been passed on us poor things; the gift of real sight hath not been given to us, in that it hath not been permitted us to see without the light. Windows, they are, not eyes!

"How wretchedly shall we endure to hear our kindred breaths breathe in the air, when we no longer shall be breathing with them! For home, instead of this great world high in the air, a heart's small mass awaits us. Set Thou us free from bonds so base as these to which we have sunk down, and end our grief!

"O Lord and Father, and our Maker, if so it be Thou hast thus quickly grown indifferent unto the works of Thine own Hands, appoint for us some limits! Still deem us worthy of some words, though they be few, while yet we can see through the whole world-order bright on every side."

22. Thus speaking, Horus, son, the Souls gained their request; for that the Monarch came, and sitting on the throne of truth made answer to their prayers:

"O souls, love and Necessity shall be your lords, they who are lords and marshals after Me of all. Know, all of you who are set under My gaining rule, that as long as ye keep you free of sin, ye shall dwell in the fields of Heaven; but if some cause of blame for aught attached itself to you, ye shall dwell in the place that Destiny allots, condemned to mortal wombs.

"If, then, the things imputed to your charge be slight, leaving the bond of fleshly frames subject to death, ye shall again embrace your--father--Heaven, and sin no more; but if ye shall commit some greater sins, and with the end appointed of your frames be not advanced, no longer shall ye dwell in Heaven, nor even in the bodies of mankind, but shall continue after that to wander round in lives irrational."

23. Thus speaking, Horus mine, He gave to all the gift of breath, and thus continued:

"It is not without purpose or by chance I have laid down the law of your transformings; but as--it will be--for the worse if ye do aught unseemly, so for the better, if she shall will what's worthy of your birth.

"For L and no one else, will be the witness and the watcher. Know, then, it is for what ye have done heretofore, ye do endure this being shut in bodies as a punishment.

"The difference in your rebirths, accordingly, for you, shall be as I have said, a difference of bodies, and their--final--dissolution--shall be--a benefit and a--return to--the fair happiness of former days.

"But if ye think to do aught else unworthy of Me, your mind shall lose its sight so as to think the contrary--of what is true--, and take the punishment for benefit; the change to better things for infamous despite.

"But the more righteous of you, who stand upon the threshold of the change to the diviner state, shall among men be righteous kings, and genuine philosophers, founders of states, and lawgivers, and real seers,

and true herb-knowers, and prophets of the gods most excellent, skillful musicians, skilled astronomers, and augurs wise, consummate sacrificers--as many of you as are worthy of things fair and good.

24. "Among winged tribes--they shall be--eagles, for these will neither scare away their kind nor feed on them; nay more, when they are by, no other weaker beast will be allowed by them to suffer wrong, for what will be the eagles' nature is too just--to suffer it--.

"Among four-footed things--they will be--lions,--a life of strength and of a kind which in a measure needs no sleep, in mortal body practising the exercises of immortal life--for they nor weary grow nor sleep.

"And among creeping things--they will be--dragons, in that this animal will have great strength and live for long, will do no harm, and in a way be friends with man, and let itself be tamed; it will possess no poison and will cast its skin, as the nature of the Gods.

"Among the things that swim--they will be--dolphins; for dolphins will take pity upon those who fall into the sea, and if they are still breathing bear them to the land, while if they're dead they will not ever even touch them, though they will be the most voracious tribe that in the water dwells."

25. Thus speaking God became imperishable mind. Thereon, son Horus, from earth uprose a very mighty spirit which no mass of body could contain, whose strength consisted in his intellect. And though he knew full well the things on which he questioned--the body with which man was clothed according to his type, a body fair and dignified, yet savage overmuch and full of fear--immediately he saw the souls were entering the plasms, he cried out: "What are these called, O Hermes, writer of the records of the gods?"

And when He answered "Men!"--" Hermes," he said, "it is a daring work, this making man, with eyes inquisitive, and talkative of tongue, with power henceforth to hear things even which are no concern of his, dainty of smell, who will use to its full his power of touch on every thing.

"Hast thou, his generator, judged it good to leave him from care, who in the future daringly will gaze upon the fairest mysteries which Nature



hath? Wouldst thou leave him without a grief, who in the days to come will make his thoughts reach unto mysteries beyond the Earth?

26. "Men will dig up the roots of plants, and will find out their juices' qualities. Men will observe the nature of the stones. Men will dissect not only animals irrational, but they'll dissect themselves, daring to find out how they were made. They will stretch out their daring hands e'en to the sea, and cutting self-grown forests down will ferry one another o'er to lands beyond. --Men--will seek out as well the inner nature of the holy spaces which no foot may tread, and will chase after them into the great Space, desiring to observe the nature of the motion of the Heaven.

"These are yet moderate things--which they will do--. For nothing more remains than earth's remotest realms; nay, in their daring they will track out night, the farthest night of all.

27. "Naught have they, then, to stop them from receiving their initiation in the good of freedom from all pain, and unconstrained by terror's grievous goads, from living softly out a life free from care.

"Then will they not gird on the armour of an over-busy daring up to Heaven? Will they not, then, reach out their souls free from all care unto the--primal--elements themselves?

"Teach them henceforth to long to plan out something, where they have as well to fear the danger of its ill-success, in order that they may be tamed by the sharp tooth of pain in failure of their hopes.

"Let the too busy nature of their souls be balanced by desires, and fears, and griefs, and empty hopes.

"Let loves in quick succession sway their souls, hopes, manifold desires, sometimes fulfilled, and sometimes unfulfilled, that the sweet bait of their success may draw them into struggle amid direr ills, "Let fever lay its heavy hand on them, that losing heart they may submit desire to discipline."

28. Thou grieveest, dost thou, Horus, Son, to hear thy mother put these things in words? Art thou not struck with wonder, art thou not terrorstruck at how poor man was grievously oppressed? Hear what is sadder still!

When Momos said these things Hermes was pleased, for what he said was said out of affection for him; and so he did all that he recommended, speaking thus:

"Momos, the nature of the breath divine which doth surround--all things--shall not become inert. The Master of the universe appointed me as steward and as manager.

Wherefore the overseer of His command will be the keen-eyed goddess of the all, Adrasteia; and I will skillfully devise an instrument, mysterious, possessed of power of sight that cannot err, and cannot be escaped, whereto all things on earth shall of necessity be subject, from birth to final dissolution--an instrument which binds together all that's done. This instrument shall rule all other things on earth as well--as man."

29. These words, said Hermes, did I speak to Momos, and forthwith the instrument was set a-going.

When this was done, and when the souls had entered in the bodies, and--Hermes--had himself been praised for what was done, again the Monarch did convoke the gods in session. The gods assembled, and once more did He make proclamation, saying:

"Ye Gods, all ye who have been made of chiefest nature, free from all decay, who have received as your appointed lot for ever more to order out the mighty Aeon, through whom all universal things will never weary grow surrendering themselves in urn the one to other--how long shall we be rulers of this sovereignty that none can ever know? How long these things, shall they transcend the power of sight of sun and moon?

"Let each of us bring forth according to his power. Let us by our own energy wipe out this inert state of things; let chaos seem to be a myth incredible to future days. Set hand to mighty work; and I myself will first begin."

30. He spake; straightway in cosmic order there began the differentiation of the up-to-then black unity--of things--. And heaven shone forth above tricked out with all his mysteries; earth, still a-tremble, as the sun shone forth grew harder, and appeared with all the fair adornment that bedeck her round on every side. For beautiful to

God are even things which men think mean, in that in truth they have been made to serve the laws of God.

And God rejoiced when now He saw His works a-moving; and filling full His hands, which held as much as all surrounding space, with all that nature had produced, and squeezing tight the handfuls mightily, He said:

"Take--these--, O holy Earth, take those, all honoured one, who are to be the mother of all things, and henceforth lack thou naught!"

31. God spake and opening His hands, such hands as God should have, He poured them all into the composition of the world. And they in the beginning were unknown in every way; for that the souls as newly shut in prison, not enduring their disgrace, began to strive in emulation with the gods in heaven, in full command, in that they had the same creator, made revolt, and using weaker men as instruments, began to make them set upon each other, and range themselves in conflict, and make war among themselves.

Thus strength did mightily prevail o'er weakness, so that the strong did burn and massacre the weak, and from the holy places down they cast the living and the dead down from the holy shrines, until the elements in their distress resolved to go to God their Monarch--to complain--about the savage state in which men lived.

The evil now being very great, the elements approached to God who made them, and formulated their complaint in some such words as these:

32. It was moreover fire who first received authority to speak. He said:

"O Lord, artificer of this new world, thou name mysterious among the gods, and up to now revered by all mankind, how long hast Thou, O Daimon, judged it right to leave the life of mortals without God?

"Show now Thyself unto Thy world consulting Thee; initiate the savagery of life with peace; give laws to life; to right give oracles; fill with fair hopes all things; and let men fear the vengeance of the gods, and none will sin.

"Should they receive due retribution for their sins, they will refrain henceforth from doing wrong; they will respect their oaths, and no one any more will ponder sacrilege.

"Let them be taught to render thanks for benefits received, that I, the fire, may joyfully do service in the sacrificial rites, that they may from the altar send sweet-smelling vapours forth.

"For up to now I am polluted, Lord; and by the godless daring of these men I am compelled to burn up flesh. They will not let me be for what I was brought forth; but they adulterate with all indecency my undecaying state."

33. And the air too said:

"I also, Master, I am made turbid by the vapours which the bodies of the dead exhale, and I am pestilential, and, no longer filled with health, I gaze down on things I ought not to behold."

Next water, O my son of mighty soul, received authority to speak, and spake and said:

"O Father, O wonderful creator of all things, daimon self-born, and Nature's maker, who through Thee doth conceive all things, now at this last, command the rivers' streams for ever to be pure, for that the rivers and the seas or wash the murderers' hands or else receive the murdered."

34. After came earth in bitter grief, and taking up the tale, O son of high renown, thus she began to speak:

"O sovereign Lord, chief of the heavenly ones, and master of the wheels, Thou ruler of us elements, O Sire of them who stand beside Thee, for whom all things have the beginning of their increase and of their decrease, and into whom they cease again and have the end that is their due according to necessity's decree, O greatly honoured One, the godless rout of men doth dance upon my bosom.

"I hold in my embrace as well as the nature of all things; for I, as Thou didst give command, not only bear them all, but I receive them also

when they're killed. But now I am dishonoured. The world upon the earth though filled with all things--else--hath not a God.

"For having naught to fear they sin in everything, and from my heights, O Lord, down--dead--they fall from every evil art. And soaking with the juices of their carcasses I'm all corrupt. Hence am I, Lord, compelled to hold in me those of no worth. With all I bear I would hold God as well.

"Bestow on earth, if not Thyself, for I could not contain Thee, yet some holy emanation of Thyself. Make Thou the earth more honoured than the rest of elements; for it is right that she should boast of gifts from Thee, in that she giveth all."

35. Thus spake the elements; and God, fulfilling all things with the sound of His--most--holy Voice, spake thus: "Depart, ye Holy Ones, ye children worthy of a mighty sire, nor yet in any way attempt to innovate, nor leave the whole of--this--My world without your active service.

"For now another efflux of My nature is among you, and he shall be a pious supervisor of all deeds--judge incorruptible of living men and monarch absolute of those beneath the earth, not only striking terror--into them--but taking vengeance on them. And by his class of birth the fate he hath deserved shall follow every man."

And so the elements did cease from their complaint, upon the master's order, and they held their peace; and each of them continued in the exercise of his authority and in his rule.

36. And Horus thereon said:

How was it, mother, then, that earth received God's efflux?

And Isis said:

I may not tell the story of--this--birth; for it is not permitted to describe the origin of thy descent, O Horus--son--of mighty power, lest afterwards the way-of-birth of the immortal Gods should be known unto men,--except so far that God the monarch, the universal orderer and architect, sent for a little while thy mighty sire Osiris, and the

mightiest Goddess Isis, that they might help the world, for all things needed them.

'Tis they who filled life full of life. 'Tis they who caused the savagery of mutual slaughtering of men to cease. 'Tis they who hallowed precincts to the gods their ancestors and spots for holy rites. 'Tis they who gave to men laws, food, and shelter.

'Tis they who will, says Hermes, learn to know the secrets of my records all, and will make separation of them; and some they will keep for themselves, while those that are best suited for the benefit of mortal men, they will engrave on tablet and on obelisk.

'Tis they who were the first to set up courts of law; and filled the world with justice and fair rule. 'Tis they who were the authors of good pledges and of faith, and brought the mighty witness of an oath into men's lives.

'Tis they who taught men how to wrap up those who ceased to live, as they should be.

'Tis they who searched into the cruelty of death, and learned that though the spirit which goes out longs to return into men's bodies, yet if it ever fail to have the power of getting back again, then loss of life results.

'Tis they who learned from Hermes that surrounding space was filled with daimons, and graved on hidden stones--the hidden teaching--.

'Tis they alone who, taught by Hermes in God's hidden codes, became the authors of the arts, and sciences, and all pursuits which men do practice, and givers of the laws.

'Tis they who, taught by Hermes that the things below have been disposed of by God to be in sympathy with things above, established on the earth the sacred rites o'er which the mysteries in Heaven preside.

'Tis they who, knowing the destructibility of--mortal--frames, devised the grade of prophets, in all things perfected, in order that no prophet who stretched forth his hands unto the Gods, should be in ignorance of

anything, that magic and philosophy should feed the soul, and medicine preserve the body when it suffered pain.

38. And having done all this, my son, Osiris and myself perceiving that the world was--now--quite full, were thereupon demanded back by those who dwell in Heaven, but could not go above until he had made appeal unto the monarch, that surrounding space might with this knowledge of the soul be filled as well, and we ourselves succeed in making our ascent acceptable--to Him-- . . . For that God doth in hymns rejoice.

Ay, mother, Horus said. On me as well bestow the knowledge of this hymn, that I may not remain in ignorance.

And Isis said: Give ear, O son!

## THE VIRGIN OF THE WORLD--II

39. Now if thou wouldst, O son of mighty soul, know aught beside, ask on!

And Horus said: O mother of great honour, I would know how royal souls are born?

And Isis said: Son Horus, the distinction which marks out the royal souls is somewhat of this kind.

Four regions are there in the universe which fall beneath a law and leadership which cannot be transgressed--heaven, and the æther, and the air, and the most holy earth.

Above in Heaven, son, the gods do dwell, o'er whom with all the rest doth rule the Architect of all; and in the æther--dwell--the stars o'er whom the mighty light-giver the sun holds sway; but in the air--live--only souls, o'er whom doth rule the moon; and on the earth--do dwell--men and the rest of living things, o'er whom he who doth happen to be king holds sway.

40. The gods engender, son, the kings it has deserved, to rule--the race--that lives on earth. The rulers are the emanations of the king, of whom the nearer to him is more royal than the rest; for that the sun, in that 'tis

nearer than the moon to God, is far more vast and potent, to whom the moon comes second both in rank and power.

The king, then, is the last of all the other gods, but first of men; and so long as he is upon the earth, he is divorced from his true godship, but hath something that doth distinguish him from men and which is like to God.

The soul which is sent down to dwell in him, is from that space which is above those regions whence--the souls--descend to other men. Down from that space the souls are sent to rule for those two reasons, son.

41. They who have run a noble, blameless race throughout the cycle of their lives, and are about to be changed into Gods--are born as kings--in order that by exercise of kingship they may train themselves to use the power the gods enjoy; while certain souls who are already gods, but have in some slight way infringed the rule of life which God inspired, are born as kings, in order that they may not, in being clothed in bodies, undergo the punishment of loss of dignity as well as nature, and that they may not, when they are enfleshed, have the same lot as other men, but have when bound what they enjoyed when free.

42. The differences which are, however, in the dispositions shown by those who play the part of kings, are not determined by distinguishing their souls, for these are all divine, but by the constitution of the angels and the daimons who attend on them. For that such souls as these descending for such purposes do not come down without a guard and escort, for justice up above knows how to give to each what is its due estate e'en though they be made exiles from their country ever fair.

When, then, my son, the angels and the daimons who bring down the soul are of a warlike kind, it has to keep firm hold of their proclivities, forgetting its own proper deeds, but all the more remembering the doings of the other host attached to it.

When they are peaceful, then the soul as well doth order its own course in peace.

When they love justice, then it too defends the right.

When they are music-lovers, then it also sings.



And when they are truth-lovers, then it also doth philosophise.

For as it were out of necessity these souls keep a firm hold of the proclivities of those that bring them here; for they are falling down to man's estate, forgetting their own nature, and the farther they depart from it, the more they have in memory the disposition of those--powers--which shut them--into bodies--.

43. Well hast thou, mother, all explained, said Horus. But noble souls,--how they are born, thou hast not told me yet.

As on earth, son Horus, there are states which differ one from other, so also is it in the case of souls. For they have regions whence they start; and that which starts from a more glorious place, hath nobler birth than one which doth not so. For just as among men the free is thought more noble than the slave--for that which is superior in souls and of a ruling nature of necessity subjects what is inferior--so also, son . . .

44. And how are male and female souls produced?

Souls, Horus, son, are of the self-same nature in themselves, in that they are from one and the same place where the Creator modeled them; nor male nor female are they. Sex is a thing of bodies, not of souls.

That which brings it about that some of them are stouter, some more delicate, is, son, that--cosmic--"air" in which all things are made. "Air" for the soul is nothing but the body which envelops it, an element which is composed of earth and water, air and fire.

As, then, the composition of the female ones has more of wet and cold, but less of dry and warm, accordingly the soul which is shut in a plasm of this kind becomes relaxed and delicate, just as the contrary is found to be in case of males.

For in their case there's more of dry and warm, and less of cold and wet; wherefore the souls in bodies such as these are sturdy and more active.

45. And how do souls become intelligent, O mother mine?

And Isis answered:

The organ of the sight, my son, is swathed in wrappings. When these are dense and thick, the eye is dim, but when they're thin and light, then is the sight most keen. So also is it for the soul. For it as well has envelopes incorporeal appropriate to it, just as it is itself incorporeal. These envelopes are "airs" which are in us. When these are light and thin and clear, then is the soul intelligent, but, on the contrary, when they are dense and thick and turbid, then--the soul--, as in bad weather, sees not at distance but only things which lie about its feet.

46. And Horus said:

What is the reason, mother, that the men outside our holiest land are not so wise of mind as our compatriots?

And Isis said:

The earth lies in the middle of the universe upon her back, like to a human being, with eyes turned up to heaven, and portioned out into as many regions as there are limbs in man.

She turns her eyes to heaven as though to her own sire, that with his changes she may also bring about her own.

She hath her head set to the south of all, right shoulder to southeast, left shoulder to southwest; her feet below the Bear, right foot beneath its tail, left under its head; her thighs beneath those that succeed the Bear; her waist beneath the middle--stars--.

47. A sign of this is that men in the south, who dwell upon her head, are fine about the head and have good hair. Those in the east are ready for a fight and archer folk--for this pertains to the right hand.

Those in the west are steadier and for the most part fight with the left hand, and what is done by others with the right, they for their part attribute to the left.

Those beneath the Bear excel in feet and have especially good legs.

Those who come after them a little way, about the zone which is our present Italy, and Greece, they all have well made thighs and backs . . .

Moreover, all these--northern--parts being whiter than the rest bear whiter men upon them,

'But since the holiest land of our forebears lies in the midst of earth, and that the midst of a man's body serves as the precinct of the heart alone, and heart's the spot from which the soul doth start, the men of it not only have no less the other things which all the rest possess, but as a special thing are gifted with intelligence beyond all men and filled with wisdom, in that they are begotten and brought up above her heart.

48. Further, my son, the south being the receiver of the clouds which mass themselves together from the atmosphere . . .

For instance, it is just because there is this concentration of them in the south, that it is said our river doth flow thence, upon the breaking up of the frost there.

For whensoever a cloud descends, it turns the air about it into mist, and sends it downward in a kind of fog; and fog or mist is an impediment not only to the eyes, but also to the mind.

Whereas the east, O Horus, great in glory, in that 'tis thrown into confusion and made over-hot by the continual risings of the sun, and in like fashion too, the west, its opposite, in that it suffers the same things through its descents, afford the men born in them no conditions for clear observation. And Boreas with his concordant cold, together with their bodies doth congeal the minds of men as well.

Whereas the centre of all these being pure and undisturbed, foreknows both for itself and all that are in it. For, free from trouble, ever it brings forth, adorns and educates, and only with such weapons wars--on men-- , and wins the victory, and with consummate skill, like a good satrap, bestows the fruit of its own victory upon the vanquished.

49. This too expound, O lady, mother of mine! For what cause is it that when men still keep alive in long disease, their rational part--their very reason and their very soul--at times becomes disabled?

And Isis answer made:

Of living things, my son, some are made friends with fire, and some with water, some with air, and some with earth, and some with two or three of these, and some with all.

And, on the contrary, again some are made enemies of fire, and some of water, some of earth, and some of air, and some of two of them, and some of three, and some of all.

For instance, son, the locust and all flies flee fire; the eagle and the hawk and all high-flying birds flee water; fish, air and earth; the snake avoids the open air. Whereas snakes and all creeping things love earth; all swimming things--love--water; winged things, air, of which they are the citizens; while those that fly still higher--love--the fire and have the habitat near it. Not that some of the animals as well do not love fire; for instance salamanders, for they even have their homes in it. It is because one or another of the elements doth form their bodies' outer envelope.

50. Each soul, accordingly, while it is in its body is weighted and constricted by these four. Moreover it is natural it also should be pleased with some of them and pained with others.

For this cause, then, it doth not reach the height of its prosperity; still, as it is divine by nature, e'en while--wrapped up--in them, it struggles and it thinks, though not such thoughts as it would think were it set free from being bound in bodies.

Moreover if these--frames--are swept with storm and stress, or of disease or fear, then is the soul itself tossed on the waves, as man upon the deep with nothing steady under him.

## CHAPTER VI

### EGYPTIAN MAGIC

TO the peoples of antiquity Egypt appeared as the very mother of magic. In the mysterious Nile country they found a magical system much more highly developed than any within their native knowledge, and the cult of the dead, with which Egyptian religion was so strongly identified, appeared to the foreigner to savour of magical practice. If the

materials of the magical papyri be omitted, the accounts which we possess of Egyptian magic are almost wholly foreign, so that it is wiser to derive our data concerning it from the original native sources if we desire to arrive at a proper understanding of Egyptian sorcery.

Most of what has been written by Egyptologists on the subject of Egyptian magic has been penned on the assumption that magic is either merely a degraded form of religion, or its foundation. This is one of the results of the archæologist entering a domain--that of anthropology--where he is usually rather at a loss. For example, we find Sir Gaston Maspero stating that "ancient magic was the very foundation of religion. The faithful who desired to obtain some favor from a god had no chance of succeeding except by laying hands on the deity, and this arrest could only be effected by means of a certain number of rites, sacrifices, prayers, and chants, which the god himself had revealed and which obliged him to do what was demanded of him." Then we find Dr. Budge stating that in the religious texts and works we see how magic is made to be the handmaiden of religion, and that whereas non-Egyptian races directed their art against the powers of darkness, and invoked a class of benevolent beings to their aid, the Egyptians aimed at complete control over their native deities.

Let us glance for a moment at the question of the origin of magic. Considerable diversity of opinion exists regarding this subject among present-day anthropologists, and the works of Frazer, Marett, Hubert, and Mauss, etc., although differing widely as regards its foundations, have thrown much light upon a hitherto obscure problem. All writers on the subject, however, appear to have ignored one notable circumstance in connection with it--that is, the element of wonder, which is the true fount and source of veritable magic. According to the warring schools of anthropology, nearly all magic is sympathetic or mimetic in its nature. For example, when the barbarian medicine-man desires rain he climbs a tree and sprinkles water upon the parched earth beneath, in the hope that the deity responsible for the weather will do likewise; when the ignorant sailor desires wind, he imitates the whistling of the gale. This system is universal, but if our conclusions are well founded, the magical element does not reside in such practices as these. It must be obvious, as Frazer has pointed out, that when the savage performs an act of sympathetic magic he does not regard it as magical--that is, to his way of thinking it does not contain any element of wonder at all; he regards his action as a cause which is certain to bring about the desired effect, exactly as the scientific man of today believes that if he follows certain formulæ certain results will be

achieved. Now the true magic of wonder argues from effect to cause; so it would appear as if sympathy magic were merely a description of proto-science, due to mental processes entirely similar to those by which scientific laws are produced and scientific acts are performed -- that there is a spirit of certainty about it which is not found, for example, in the magic of evocation.

It would, however, be rash to attempt to differentiate sympathetic magic entirely from what I would call the "magic of wonder" at this juncture; indeed, our knowledge of the basic laws of magic is too slight as yet to permit of such a process. We find considerable overlapping between the systems. For example, one of the ways by which evilly disposed persons could transform themselves into werewolves was by means of buckling on a belt of wolfskin. Thus we see that in this instance the true wonder-magic of animal transformation is in some measure connected with the sympathetic process, the idea being that the donning of wolfskin, or even the binding around one of a strip of the animal's hide, was sufficient to bestow the nature of the beast upon the wearer. In passing, I may say, for the sake of completeness, that I believe the magic of wonder to be almost entirely spiritistic in its nature, and that it consists of evocation and similar processes. Here, of course, it may be quoted against me that certain incenses, planetary signs, and other media known to possess affinities for certain supernatural beings were brought into use at the time of their evocation. Once more I admit that the two systems overlap; but that will not convince me that they are in essence the same.

### **Antiquity of Egyptian Magic.**

Like all magic, Egyptian magic was of prehistoric origin. As the savage of today employs the sympathetic process, so did the savage of the Egyptian Stone Age make use of it. That he also was fully aware of the spiritistic side of magic is certain. Animism is the mother of spiritism. The concept of the soul was arrived at at a comparatively early period in the history of man. The phenomenon of sleep puzzled him. Whither did the real man betake himself during the hours of slumber? The Palæolithic man watched his sleeping brother, who appeared to him as practically dead--dead, at least, to perception and the realities of life. Something seemed to have escaped the sleeper; the real, vital, and vivifying element had temporarily departed from him. From his own experience the puzzled savage knew that life did not cease with sleep, for in a more shadowy and unsubstantial sphere he re-enacted the scenes of his everyday existence. If the man during sleep had

experiences in dreamland or in distant parts, it was only reasonable to suppose that his ego, his very self, had temporarily quitted the body. Grant so much, and you have two separate entities, body and soul, similar in appearance because the latter on the dream plane exercised functions identical with those of the former on the corporeal plane.

### **The Wandering Spirit.**

But prehistoric logic did not stop here. So much premised, it extended its soul-theory to all animate beings, and even to things inanimate. Where, for example, did the souls of men go after death? Their bodies decayed, so it was only reasonable to suppose that they cast about them for other corporeal media. Failing their ability to enter the body of a new-born infant, they would take up their quarters in a tree, a rock, or any suitable natural object, and the terrified savage could hear their voices crying down the wind and whispering through the leaves of the forest, possibly clamoring or entreating for that food and shelter which they could not obtain in their disembodied condition. All nature, then, we see became animate to early man, and not less so to the early Egyptian than to others. But his hunting life had made prehistoric man exceptionally cunning and resourceful, and it would soon occur to him--in what manner we do not presume to say, as the point greatly requires elucidation--that we might possibly make use of such wandering and masterless spirits as he knew were close to his call. In this desire, it appears to me--if the statement be not a platitude--we have one of the origins of the magic of wonder, and certainly the origin of spiritism. Trading upon the wish of the disembodied spirit to materialize, prehistoric man would construct a fetish either in the human shape or in that of an animal, or in any weird presentment that squared with his ideas of spiritual existence. He usually made it of no great dimensions, as he did not believe that the *alter ego*, or soul, was of any great size. By threats or coaxings he prevailed upon the wandering spirit--whom he conceived as, like all the dead, cold, hungry, and homeless--to enter the little image, which duly became its corporeal abode, where its lips were piously smeared with the blood of animals slain in the chase, and where it was carefully attended. In return it was expected, by dint of its supernatural knowledge, that the soul contained in the fetish should assist its master or coadjutor in every possible way.

### **Coercing the Gods.**

Egyptian magic differed from most other systems in the circumstance that the native magician attempted to coerce certain of the gods into action on his behalf. Instances of this elsewhere are extremely rare, and it would seem as if the deities of Egypt had evolved in many cases from mere animistic conceptions. This is true in effect of all deities, but at a certain point in their history most gods arrive at such a condition of eminence that they soar far above any possibility of being employed by the magician as mere tools for any personal purpose. We often, however, find the broken-down, or deserted, deity coerced by the magician. Of this class Beelzebub might be taken as a good example. A great reputation is a hard thing to lose, and it is possible that the sorcerer may descry in the abandoned, and therefore idle, god a very suitable medium for this purpose. But we find the divinities of Egypt frightened into using their power on behalf of some paltry sorcerer even in the very zenith of their fame. One thing is of course essential to a complete system of sorcery, and that is the existence of a number of spirits, the detritus of a vanished or submerged religion.

As we know, there were numerous strata in Egyptian religion--more than one faith had obtained on the banks of the Nile, and it may be that the worshippers of the deities of another as magical on the first introduction of a new system; in fact, these may have been interchangeable, and it is possible that by the time the various gods became common to all the practice had become so universal as to be impossible of abandonment.

If our conclusions are correct, it would seem that Maspero's statement that magic is the foundation of religion is scarcely consonant with fact. We have seen that at least the greater part of barbarian magic so-called--that is, sympathetic magic--is probably not of the nature of magic at all, so that the scope of his contention is considerably lessened. Budge's dictum that the magic of every other nation of the ancient East but the Egyptian was directed entirely against the powers of darkness, and was invented to frustrate their fell designs by invoking a class of benevolent beings, is so far an error in that the peoples of the ancient Orient invoked evil beings equally with good. At the same time it must be admitted that Egyptian magic had much more in common with religion than most other magical systems, and this arose from the extraordinary circumstances of the evolution of religion on Egyptian soil.

## EGYPTIAN OCCULTISM AND SYMBOLISM



Of all civilizations known to us through history, that of ancient Egypt is the most marvellous, most fascinating, and most rich in occult significance: yet we have still much to discover, and although we have the assurance of Herodotus that the Egyptians were "beyond measure scrupulous in all matters appertaining to religion," the ancient religions--or such fragments as survive--appear at first glance confusing and even grotesque. It is necessary to remember that there was an inner as well as an outer theology, and that the occult mysteries were accessible only to those valiant and strenuous initiates who had successfully passed through a prolonged purification and course of preparation austere and difficult enough to discourage all save the most persistent and exalted spirits.

It is only available to us to wander on the outskirts of Egyptian mythology. The most familiar symbolic figures are those of Isis the moon goddess, traditional queen of Egypt, and Osiris her husband; and when we read that Isis was the sister, wife, and mother of Osiris we must seek the inner meaning of the strange and impossible relationship. It has been lucidly explained by Princess Karadja in her *King Solomon: a Mystic Drama*, 1912, pp. 130 to 131:

"Originally the dual souls are part of the same Divine Ego. They are golden fruits upon the great Tree of Life: 'male and female He created them.'

Isis is the *Sister* of Osiris because she is of Divine origin like himself, and is a sprit of equal rank.

She is his *Wife*, because she alone can fill his highest cravings.

She is his *Mother* because it is the mission of Woman to restore Man unto spiritual life."

How Osiris was slain by his brother Typhon--or Set--the spirit of evil, and dismembered into fourteen fragments which were scattered and bidden by the destroyer; how Isis, widowed and broken-hearted, sought patiently until she found each fragment, and how Horus her son when he grew to manhood challenged and conquered Typhon--all this is the figurative rendering of the eternal battle between light and darkness.

Typhon or Set symbolises autumn, decay, and destruction, Osiris springtime, light, and the fertilizing and growing powers of nature. Isis is typified in many forms, but was especially revered as the goddess of procreation, universal mother of the living, and protectress of the spirits of the dead.

Her symbol was the cow, and she is usually depicted wearing cow's horns, and between them the orb of the moon.

But more ancient and more exalted than Osiris was Ra, the sun god, whose worship was blended with that of Isis and her husband and son. The priests of Ra established a famous temple at Heliopolis, and founded a special system of solar worship. Just as the Emperor Constantine subsequently fixed as saints' days in the Christian church the days which had been dedicated to the ancient pagan gods, so the priests of Ra adapted their cult to the tastes and notions of the people, and a whole company of subordinate gods figured in the religions of lower Egypt for many centuries. Sometimes divine virtues were portrayed in very material forms.

Between 4000 and 2000 B.C., the worship of Amen, or Amen Ra, as the greatest god of the Egyptians, was established at Thebes, which became the centre of religious teaching. The priests grew more and more powerful until finally the high priest of Amen--whose name means the "*hidden one*"--became the king of upper Egypt. Amen was regarded as the creator, with all the power and attributes of Ra the sun god, and as ruler of the lesser gods.

It has been asked why the Egyptians, who had no belief in a material resurrection, took such infinite trouble to preserve the bodies of their dead. They looked forward to a paradise in which eternal life would be the reward of the righteous, and their creed inculcated faith in the existence of a spiritual body to be inhabited by the soul which had ended its earthly pilgrimage; but such beliefs do not explain the attention bestowed upon the lifeless corpse. The explanation must be sought in the famous Book of the Dead, representing the convictions which prevailed throughout the whole of the Egyptian civilization from pre-dynastic times. Briefly, the answer to our question is this: there was a Ka or double, in which the heart-soul was located; this Ka, equivalent to the astral body of modern occultists, was believed to be able to come into touch with material things through the preserved or mummified body. This theory accords with the axiom that each atom of physical

substance has its relative equivalent on the astral plane. It will therefore be understood how, in the ancient religions, the image of a god was regarded as a medium through which his powers could be manifested. "As above, so below"; every living thing possessed some divine attribute.

Faith in prayer was an essential article of the Egyptian religion, and the spoken word of a priest was believed to have strong potency, because it had been the words of Ra uttered by Thoth which brought the universe into being. Amulets inscribed with words were consequently thought to ensure the fulfilment of the blessing expressed, or the granting of the bliss desired.

The *Book of the Dead* was not only a guide to the life hereafter, wherein they would join their friends in the realms of eternal bliss, but gave detailed particulars of the necessary knowledge, actions, and, conduct during the earthly life to ensure a future existence in the spirit world, where everlasting life was the reward of the good and annihilation the fate of the wicked, thus showing that the belief in the existence of a future life was ever before them. Various qualities, though primarily considered a manifestation of the Almighty, were attributed each to a special god who controlled and typified one particular virtue. This partly accounts for the multiplied numbers of the Egyptian gods, and with the further complications that resulted from invasions and the adoption of alien beliefs, the religious philosophy of Egypt is not easy to follow, and is often seemingly contradictory; but when we take into consideration the vast period during which this empire flourished it is natural that the external manifestations of faith should have varied as time went on.

A knowledge of life, death, and resurrection of Osiris is assumed, and his worship in association with Isis and Horus although not necessarily under these names, is continuous. Horus is frequently alluded to as the god of the ladder, and the mystic ladder seen by Jacob in his vision, and the ladder of seven steps known to the initiates of Egypt, Greece, Mexico, India, and Persia will be familiar to all students of occultism.

Throughout the whole of the Egyptian civilization, which lasted for at least 6000 years, the influence and potency of amulets and talismans was recognised in the religious services, each talisman and amulet having a specified virtue.

Certain amulets not only were worn during life, but were even attached to the dead body. They are described in the following notes

The *Crux Ansata*, or *Ankh* (see Illustrations Nos. 1, 2, 3, Plate I), was known as the symbol of life, the loop at the top of the cross consisting of the hieroglyphic Ru (O) set in an upright form, meaning the gateway, or mouth, the creative power being signified by the loop which represents a fish's mouth giving birth to water as the life of the country, bringing the inundations and renewal of the fruitfulness of the earth to those who depended upon its increase to maintain life. It was regarded as the key of the Nile which overflowed periodically and so fertilized the land.

It was also shown in the hands of the Egyptian kings, at whose coronations it played an important part, and the gods are invariably depicted holding this symbol of creative power; it was also worn to bring knowledge, power, and abundance. Again, it had reference to the spiritual life for it was from the *Crux Ansata*, or *Ankh*, that the symbol of Venus originated, the circle over the cross being the triumph of spirit, represented by the circle, over matter, shown by the cross.

The *Menat* (Illustrations Nos. 4, 7, Plate I), were specially dedicated to Hathor, who was a type of Isis, and was worn for conjugal happiness, as it gave power and strength to the organs of reproduction, promoting health and fruitfulness. It frequently formed a part of a necklace, and was elaborately ornamented; No. 4 from the British Museum, is a good specimen, the cow being an emblem of the maternal qualities which were the attributes of the goddess, who stood for all that is good and true in wife, mother, and daughter.

The *Two Plumes* (Illustration No. 5, Plate I), are sun amulets and the symbols of Ra and Thoth, the two feathers being typical of the two lives, spiritual and material. This was worn to promote uprightness in dealing, enlightenment, and morality, being symbolical of the great gods of light and air.

The *Single Plume* (Illustration No. 6, Plate I), was an emblem of Maat, the female counterpart of Thoth, who wears on her head the feather characteristic of the phonetic value of her name; she was the personification of integrity, righteousness, and truth.



Plate I: EGYPTIAN TALISMANS

Illustrations Nos. 8, 9, 10, Plate I, show three forms of the *Nefer*, a symbol of good luck, worn to attract success, happiness, vitality, and friends.

The *Cartouche*, or *Name Amulet* (Illustration No. 15, Plate I), was worn to secure favor, recognition, and remembrance, and to prevent the name of its wearer being blotted out in the next world. This is a very important amulet, as the name was believed to be an integral part of the man, without which his soul could not come before God, so that it was most essential that the name should be preserved, in order, as described in the *Book of the Dead*, "thou shalt never perish, thou shalt never, never come to an end," the loss of the name meaning the total annihilation of the individual.

The amulets of the *Angles* (see Illustrations Nos. 12, 13, Plate I) and the *Plummet* (No. 60 on the same Plate), were symbols of the god Thoth, and were worn for moral integrity, wisdom, knowledge, order, and truth. Thoth was the personification of law and order, being the god who worked out the creation as decreed by the god Ra. He knew all the words of power and the secrets of all hearts, and may be regarded as the chief recording angel; he was also the inventor of all arts and sciences.

*Bes*, shown in Illustration No. 11, Plate I, was a very popular talisman, being the god of laughter, merry-making, and good luck; by some authorities he is considered to be a foreign importation from pre-dynastic times, and he has been identified with Horus and regarded as the god who renewed youth. He was also the patron of beauty, the protector of children, and was undoubtedly the progenitor of the modern Billiken.

Illustrations Nos. 15, 19, Plate II, are examples of the *Aper*, which symbolised providence and was worn for steadfastness, stability, and alertness.

The *Tat* (Illustrations Nos. 16, 17, 18, Plate II) held a very important place in the religious services of the Egyptians, and formed the centre of the annual ceremony of the setting-up of the Tat, a service held to commemorate the death and resurrection of Osiris, this symbol representing the building-up of the backbone and reconstruction of the body of Osiris. In their services the Egyptians associated themselves with Osiris, through whose sufferings and death they hoped to rise

glorified and immortal, and secure everlasting happiness. The four cross-bars symbolise the four cardinal points, and the four elements of earth, air, fire and water, and were often very elaborately ornamented (see Illustration No. 17, Plate II, taken from an example at the British Museum). It was worn as a talisman for stability and strength, and for protection from enemies; also that all doors--or opportunities--might be open both in this life and the next. Moreover, a Tat of gold set in sycamore wood, which had been steeped in the water of Ankham flowers, was placed at the neck of the deceased on the day of interment, to protect him

on his journey through the underworld and assist him in triumphing over his foes, that he might become perfect for ever and ever.

The *Heart* was believed to be the seat of the soul, and Illustrations Nos. 20, 21, 22, Plate II, are examples of these talismans worn to prevent black magicians from bewitching the soul out of the body. The importance of these charms will be realized from the belief that if the soul left the heart, the body would quickly fade away and die. According to Egyptian lore at the judgment of the dead the heart is weighed, when, if found perfect, it is returned to its owner, who immediately recovers his powers of locomotion and becomes his own master, with strength in his limbs and everlasting felicity in his soul.

The buckle of the girdle of Isis was worn to obtain the good-will and protection of this goddess, and symbolised "the blood of Isis" and her strength and power. Frequently made of carnelian it was believed to protect its wearer from every kind of evil; also to secure the good-will of Horus; and, when placed like the golden Tat at the neck of the dead on the day of the funeral in the soul's journey through the underworld it opened up all hidden places and procured the favor of Isis and her son, Horus, for ever and ever. (See Illustrations Nos. 24, 25, 26, Plate *Tie*.)

The *Tie*, or *Sa* (Illustration No. 23, Plate *Tie*) is the symbol of Ta-urt, the hippopotamus-headed goddess, who was associated with the god Thoth, the personification of divine intelligence and human reason; it was worn for magical protection.

The *Scarab* was the symbol of Khepera, a form of the sun-god who transforms inert matter into action, creates life, and typifies the glorified spiritual body that man shall possess at the resurrection. From the enormous number of scarabs that have been found, this must have

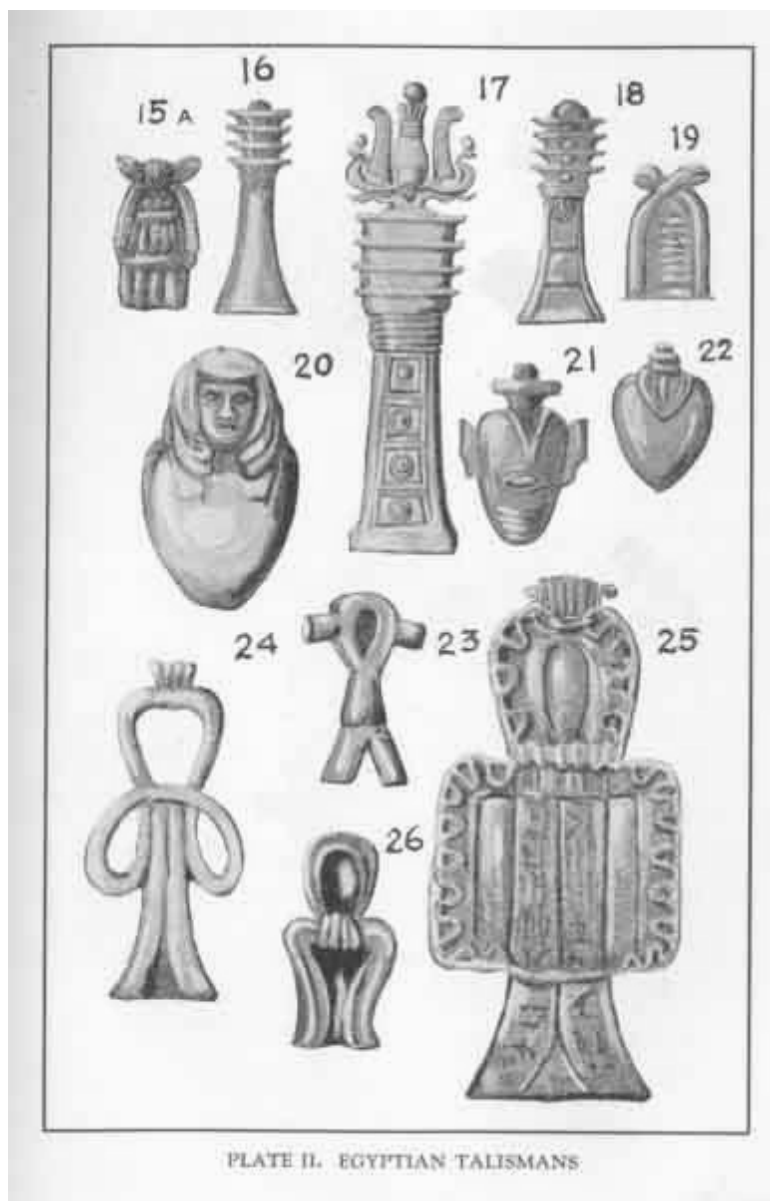


PLATE II. EGYPTIAN TALISMANS



formed the most popular of the talismans. The symbol was derived from a beetle, common in Egypt, which deposits its eggs in a ball of clay, the action of the insect in rolling this ball along the ground being compared with the sun itself in its progress across the sky; and as the ball contained the living germ which (under the heat of the sun) hatched out into a beetle, so the scarab became the symbol of creation. It is also frequently seen holding the disk of the sun between its claws, with wings extended, and it is thought by some authorities that the scarab was taken as an emblem of the sun, because the burial of its ball was symbolic of the setting sun from which new life arises with each dawn.

Scarabs of green stones with rims of gold were buried in the heart of the deceased, or laid upon the breast, with a written prayer for his protection on the day of judgment, whilst words of power were frequently recited over the scarab which was placed under the coffin as an emblem of immortality so that no fiend could harm the dead in his journey through the underworld. It is said the scarab was associated with burial as far back as the fourth dynasty (about 4600 B.C.); it represented matter about to pass from a state of inertness into active life, so was considered a fitting emblem of resurrection and immortality, typifying not only the sun's disk, but the evolutions of the soul throughout eternity. It was also worn by the Egyptian warriors in their signet rings for health, strength, and virility, it being thought that this species of beetle was all males, so that it would attract all manly qualities, both of mind and body. For this reason it was very popular as presents between friends, many scarabs being found with good wishes or mottoes engraved on the under side, and some of the kings used the back of scarabs to commemorate historical events; one in the British Museum records the slaughter of one hundred and two fierce lions by Amenhetep III, with his own hand (see Illustrations Nos. 27, 28, Plate III).

Next to the scarab, the ancient Egyptians attached much importance to the *Eye Amulet*, which, from the earliest astral mythology, was first represented by the point within the circle and was associated with the god of the pole star, which, from its fixity, was taken as a type of the eternal, unchangeable as time rolled on, and thus a fitting emblem of fixity of purpose, poise, and stability. Later it was one of the hieroglyphic signs of the sun-god Ra, and represented the one supreme power casting his eye over all the world, and instead of the point within the circle is sometimes represented as a widely open eye. This symbol was also assigned to Osiris, Isis, Horus, and Ptah; the amulet known as

the Eye of Osiris being placed upon the incision made in the side of the body--for the purpose of embalming--to watch over and guard the soul of the deceased during its passing through the darkness of the tomb to the life beyond.

It was also worn by the living to ensure health and protection from the blighting influence of workers in black magic, and for the stability, strength, and courage of Horus, the wisdom and understanding of Ptah, and the foresight of Isis.

It was also extensively used in necklaces on account of the idea that representations of the eye itself would watch over and guard its wearer from the malignant glances of the envious, it being universally believed that the fiery sparks of jealousy, hatred, and malice darting from the eyes of angry persons, envious of the good looks, health, and success of the fortunate ones, could so poison the surrounding atmosphere as even to cause sickness, decay, and death; horses were thought particularly liable to this injurious influence, and talismans to avert such a misfortune to them were hung on their foreheads, or over the left eye.

Examples of eye amulets are illustrated on Plate III, Nos. 32, 33, and 34.

When two eyes are used together the right eye is symbolic of Ra, or Osiris and the sun; whilst the left eye represents Isis, or the moon, and is sometimes called the amulet of the two Utchats; the word Utchat, signifying "strength," being applied to the sun when he enters the summer solstice about June 22d, his strength and power on earth being greatest at that time.

The talisman of the *Two Fingers* (Illustration No. 35, Plate III) was symbolical of help, assistance, and benediction, typified by the two fingers extended by Horus to assist his father in mounting the ladder suspended between this world and the next. This amulet was frequently placed in the interior of the mummified body to enable the departed to travel quickly to the regions of the blest. Amongst the ancient Egyptians the fingers were ever considered an emblem of strength and power, the raising of the first two fingers being regarded as a sign of peace and good faith; the first finger being the indicator of divine will and justice and the only one that can stand erect by itself alone; the second representing the holy spirit, the mediator, a symbolism handed down to us in the extension of the index and medius in the ecclesiastical benediction. It is also interesting to note that at the marriage ceremony



PLATE III. EGYPTIAN TALISMANS

in olden days the ring was first placed on the thumb, as typical of man's allegiance to God, and lastly on the third finger of his bride to show that next to God in the trinity, a man's life should be devoted to his wife.

The *Collar Amulet* (Illustrations Nos. 36, 37, Plate III) was a symbol of Isis, and was worn to procure her protection and the strength of her son Horus. In both examples the head of the hawk appears, this bird being attributed to Horus as well as to Ra. This collar, which was made of gold, was engraved with words of power and seems to have been chiefly used as a funeral amulet.

The *Sma* (Illustration No. 38, Plate III) was a favorite amulet from the dawn of Egyptian history, and is frequently used in various forms of decorated art. It was symbolical of union and stability of affection, and was worn to strengthen love and friendship and ensure physical happiness and faithfulness.

The *Ladder* is a symbol of Horus, and was worn to secure his assistance in overcoming and surmounting difficulties in the material world, as well as to form a connection with the heaven world, or land of light. The earliest traditions place this heaven world above the earth, its floor being the sky, and to reach this a ladder was deemed necessary. From the pyramid texts it seems there were two stages of ascent to the upper paradise, represented by two ladders, one being the ladder of Sut, forming the ladder of ascent from the land of darkness, and the other the ladder of Horus reaching the land of light (Illustration No. 39, Plate III).

The *Steps* (Illustrations Nos. 40, 41, Plate III) are a symbol of Osiris, who is described as the god of the staircase, through whom it was hoped the deceased might reach the heaven world and attain everlasting bliss.

The Snake's Head talisman (Illustration No. 42, Plate III) was worn to protect its wearer from the attacks of Rerek, or Apep, the servant of Set, who was typified as a terrible serpent, which when killed had the power of rising in new forms and who obstructed the passage to the heaven world. The serpent, although sometimes assumed to be a form of evil, was generally regarded as a protecting influence, and for this reason was usually sculptured on either side of the doorways to the tombs of kings, temples, and other sacred buildings to guard the dead from enemies of every kind, and to prevent the entrance of evil in any

shape or form. It was also placed round the heads of divinities and round the crowns of their kings as a symbol of royal might and power, being one of the forms or types of Tem the son of Ptah, who is thought by some authorities to have been the first living man god of the Egyptians, and the god of the setting sun (in contrast to Horus, who was the god of the rising sun). Tem was typified by a huge snake, and it is curious to note in connection with this that amongst country folk at the present day there is a popular belief that a serpent will not die until the sun goes down.

The *Sun's Disk* talismans (Illustrations No. 43, 45, Plate IV) are symbols of the god Ra, No. 45 being appropriately placed upon the head of a ram, the symbol of the zodiacal house Aries, in which sign the sun is exalted. It was worn for power and renown, and to obtain the favors of the great ones, being also an emblem of new birth and resurrection.

The *Frog* talisman (Illustration No. 44, Plate IV) was highly esteemed, and is an attribute of Isis, being worn to attract her favors and for fruitfulness. Because of its fertility its hieroglyphic meaning was an immense number. It was also used as a symbol of Ptah, as it represented life in embryo, and by the growth of its feet after birth it typified strength from weakness, and was worn for recovery from disease, also for health and long life, taking the place sometimes of the Crux Ansata or Ankh, as a symbol of life.

The *Pillow* (Illustration No. 46, Plate IV) was used for preservation from sickness and against pain and suffering; it was also worn for the favor of Horns, and was placed with the dead as a protection and to prevent violation of the tomb.

The *Lotus* (Illustrations No. 47, 48, Plate IV)

is a symbol with two meanings. Emblematical of the sun in the ancient days of Egypt and typifying light, understanding, fruitfulness, and plenty, it was believed to bring the favors of the god Ra. Later it is described as "the pure lily of the celestial ocean," the symbol of Isis, who is sometimes alluded to as "the white virgin." It became typical of virginity and purity, and having the double virtue of chastity and fecundity it was alike prized for maiden- and motherhood.

The *Fish* talisman (Illustrations Nos. 49, 50, Plate IV) is a symbol of Hathor--who controlled the rising of the Nile--as well as an amulet

under the influence of Isis and Horus. It typified the primeval creative principle and was worn for domestic felicity, abundance, and general prosperity.

The *Vulture* talisman (Illustration No. 51, Plate IV) was worn to protect from the bites of scorpions, and to attract motherly love and protection of Isis, who, it was believed, assumed the form of a vulture when searching for her son Horus, who, in her absence, had been stung to death by a scorpion. Thoth, moved by her lamentations, came to earth and gave her "the words of power," which enabled her to restore Horus to life. For this

reason, it was thought that this amulet would endow its wearer with power and wisdom so that he might identify himself with Horus and partake of his good fortune in the fields of eternal bliss.

It is, of course, difficult and futile to speculate as to the extent of the influence these Egyptian amulets and talismans exercised over this ancient people, but in the light of our present knowledge we feel that the religious symbolism they represented, the conditions under which they were made, the faith in their efficacy, and the invocations and "words of power" which in every case were a most essential part of their mysterious composition makes them by far the most interesting of any yet dealt with.

Gnosticism is the name given to a system of religion which came into existence in the Roman empire about the time Christianity was established; it was founded on a philosophy known in Asia Minor centuries previously and apparently based upon the Egyptian beliefs, the Zendavesta, Buddhism, and the Kabala, with their conception of the perpetual conflict between good and evil.

The name is derived from the Greek *Gnosis*, meaning knowledge, and, in brief, the gnostics' belief was that the intellectual world, with its spirits, intelligences, and various orders of angels were created by the Almighty, and that the visible matter of creation was an emanation from these powers and forces.

The attributes of the Supreme Being were those of Kabala:--Wisdom--Jeh; prudence--Jehovah; magnificence--El; severity--Elohim; victory and glory--Zaboath; empire--Adonai; the Gnostics also took from the Talmud the planetary princes and the angels under them.



PLATE IV. EGYPTIAN TALISMANS

Basilides, the Gnostic priest, taught that God first created

- (1) *Nous*, or mind; from this emanated
- (2) *Logos*, the Word; from this
- (3) *Phronesis*, Intelligence; and from this
- (4) *Sophia*, Wisdom; and from the last
- (5) *Dynamis*, Strength.

The Almighty was known as Abraxas, which signifies in Coptic "the Blessed Name," and was symbolized by a figure, the head of which is that of a cock, the body that of a man, with serpents forming the legs; in his right hand he holds a whip, and on his left arm is a shield. This talisman (see Illustrations Nos. 55, 56, Plate IV) is a combination of the five emanations mentioned above: *Nous* and *Logos* are expressed by the two serpents, symbols of the inner sense and understanding, the head of the cock representing *Phronesis*, for foresight and vigilance; the two arms hold the symbols of *Sophia* and *Dynamis*, the shield of wisdom and the whip of power, worn for protection from moral and physical ill.

The Gnostics had great faith in the efficacy of sacred names and sigils when engraved on stones as talismans; also in magical symbols derived principally from the Kabala.

One of the most popular inscriptions was *Iaw* (Jehovah), and in Illustration No. 52, Plate IV, this is shown surrounded by the serpent *Khoubis*, taken from the Egyptian philosophy, representing the creative principles, and was worn for vitality, understanding, and protection. The seven Greek vowels (Illustration No. 53, Plate IV) symbolized the seven heavens, or planets, whose harmony keeps the universe in existence, each vowel having seven different methods of expression corresponding with a certain force, the correct utterance of these letters and comprehension of the forces typified being believed to confer supreme power, bringing success in all enterprises and giving complete control over all the powers of darkness.

Illustration No. 54, Plate IV, is an example of the use of the magic symbols, the meaning of which has been lost. It is probably a



composition of the initial letters of some mystical sigil, enclosed by a serpent and the names of the arch-angels Gabriel, Paniel, Ragauel, Thureiel, Souriel, and Michael. It was worn for health and success; also for protection from all evils, and it is cut in an agate and set in a gold mount.

A figure of a serpent with a lion's head, usually surrounded with a halo, was worn to protect its wearer from heart and chest complaints and to drive away demons.

The mystic Aum, already described in the chapter on Indian talismans, was also a favorite with the Gnostics, and equally popular was a talisman composed of the vowels I A Ω, repeated to make twelve, this number representing the ineffable name of God, which, according to the Talmud, was only communicated to the most pious of the priesthood. They also adopted from the Egyptians the following symbols: *Horus*, usually represented seated on a Lotus, for fertility; *Osiris*, usually in the form of a mummified figure, for spiritual attainment; and *Isis* for the qualities mentioned in the previous chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE VISION OF HERMES

ONE day, Hermes, after reflecting on the origin of things, fell asleep. A dull torpor took possession of his body; but in proportion as the latter grew benumbed, his spirit ascended into space. Then an immense being, of indeterminate form, seemed to call him by name.

"Who art thou?" said the terrified Hermes.

"I am Osiris, the sovereign Intelligence who is able to unveil all things. What desirest thou?"

"To behold the source of beings, O divine Osiris, and to know God."

"Thou shalt be satisfied."

Immediately Hermes felt himself plunged in a delicious light. In its pellucid billows passed the ravishing forms of all beings. Suddenly, a terrifying encircling darkness descended upon him. Hermes was in a humid chaos, filled with smoke and with a heavy, rumbling sound. Then a voice rose from the abyss, the *cry of light*. At once a quick-leaping flame darted forth from the humid depths, reaching to the ethereal heights. Hermes ascended with it, and found himself again in the expanse of space. Order began to clear up chaos in the abyss; choruses of constellations spread above his head and *the voice of light* filled infinity.

"Dost thou understand what thou hast seen?" said Osiris to Hermes, bound down in his dream and suspended between earth and sky.

"No," said Hermes.

"Thou wilt now learn. Thou hast just seen what exists from all eternity. The light thou didst first see is the divine intelligence which contains all things in potentiality, enclosing the models of all beings. The darkness in which thou wast afterwards plunged is the material world on which the men of earth live. But the fire thou didst behold shooting forth from the depths, is the divine Word. God is the Father, the Word is the son, and their union is Life."

"What marvellous sense has opened out to me?" asked Hermes. "I no longer see with the eyes of the body, but with those of the spirit. How has that come to pass?"

"Child of dust," replied Osiris, "it is because the Word is in thee. That in thee which hears, sees, and acts is the Word itself, the sacred fire, the creative utterance!"

"Since things are so," said Hermes, "grant that I may see the light of the worlds; the path of souls from which man comes and to which he returns."

"Be it done according to thy desire."

Hermes became heavier than a stone and fell through space like a meteorite. Finally he reached the summit of a mountain. It was night,

the earth was gloomy and deserted, and his limbs seemed as heavy as iron.

"Raise thine eyes and look!" said the voice of Osiris.

Then Hermes saw a wonderful sight. The starry heavens, stretching through infinite space, enveloped him with seven luminous spheres. In one glance, Hermes saw the seven heavens stretching above his head, tier upon tier, like seven transparent and concentric globes, the sidereal centre of which he now occupied. The milky way formed the girdle of the last. In each sphere there rolled a planet accompanied by a genius of different form, sign and light. Whilst Hermes, dazzled by the sight, was contemplating their wide-spread efflorescence and majestic movements, the voice said to him:

"Look, listen, and understand. Thou seest the seven spheres of all life. Through them is accomplished the fall and ascent of souls. The seven genii are the seven rays of the word-light. Each of them commands one sphere of the spirit, one phase of the life of souls. The one nearest to thee is the Genius of the Moon, with his disquieting smile and crown of silver sickle. He presides over births and deaths, sets free souls from bodies and draws them into his ray. Above him, pale Mercury points out the path to ascending or descending souls with his caduceus, which contains all knowledge. Higher still, shining Venus holds the mirror of love, in which souls forget and recognize them in turn. Above her, the Genius of the Sun raises the triumphal torch of eternal beauty. At a yet loftier height, Mars brandishes the sword of justice. Enthroned on the azure sphere, Jupiter holds the sceptre of supreme power, which is divine intelligence. At the boundaries of the world, beneath the signs of the Zodiac, Saturn bears the globe of universal wisdom.

"I see," said Hermes, "the seven regions which comprise the visible and invisible world; I see the seven rays of the word-light, of the one God who traverses them and governs them by these rays. Still, O master, how does mankind journey through all these worlds?"

"Dost thou see," said Osiris, "a luminous seed fall from the regions of the milky way into the seventh sphere? These are germs of souls. They live like faint vapors in the region of Saturn, gay and free from care, knowing not their own happiness. On falling from sphere to sphere, however, they put on increasingly heavier envelopes. In each incarnation they acquire a new corporeal sense, in harmony with the

surroundings in which they are living. Their vital energy increases, but in proportion as they enter into denser bodies they lose the memory of their celestial origin. Thus is effected the fall of souls which come from the divine ether. Ever more and more captivated by matter and intoxicated by life, they fling themselves like a rain of fire, with quiverings of voluptuous delight, through the regions of grief, love, and death, right into their earthly prison where thou thyself lamentest, held down by the fiery centre of the earth, and where divine life appears to thee nothing more than an empty dream."

"*Can souls die?*" asked Hermes.

"Yes," replied the voice of Osiris, "many perish in the fatal descent. The soul is the daughter of heaven, and its journey is a test. If it loses the memory of its origin, in its unbridled love of matter, the divine spark which was in it and which might have become more brilliant than a star, returns to the ethereal region, a lifeless atom, and the soul disaggregates in the vortex of gross elements."

Hermes shuddered at these words, for a raging tempest enveloped him in a black mist. The seven spheres disappeared beneath dense vapors. In them he saw human spectres uttering strange cries, carried off and torn by phantoms of monsters and animals, amidst nameless groans and blasphemies.

"Such is the destiny," said Osiris, "of souls irremediably base and evil. Their torture finishes only with their destruction, which includes the loss of all consciousness. The vapors are now dispersing, the seven spheres reappear beneath the firmament. Look on this side. Do you see this swarm of souls trying to mount once more to the lunar regions? Some are beaten back to earth like eddies of birds beneath the might of the tempest. The rest with mighty wings reach the upper sphere, which draws them with it as it rotates. Once they have come to this sphere, they recover their vision of divine things. This time, however, they are not content to reflect them in the dream of a powerless happiness; they become impregnated thereby with the lucidity of a grief-enlightened consciousness, the energy of a will acquired through struggle and strife. They become luminous, for they possess the divine in themselves and radiate it in their acts. Strengthen therefore thy soul, O Hermes! calm thy darkened mind by contemplating these distant flights of souls which mount the seven spheres and are scattered about therein like sheaves of sparks. Thou also canst follow them, but a strong will it

needs to rise. Look how they swarm and form into divine choruses. Each places itself beneath its favorite genius. The most beautiful dwell in the solar region; the most powerful rise to Saturn. Some ascend to the Father, powers themselves amidst powers. For where everything ends, everything eternally begins; and the seven spheres say together: 'Wisdom! Love! Justice! Beauty! Splendor! Knowledge! Immortality!'"

"This," said the hierophant, "is what ancient Hermes saw and what his successors have handed down to us. The words of the wise are like the seven notes of the lyre which contains all music, along with the numbers and the laws of the universe, The vision of Hermes resembles the starry heaven, whose unfathomable depths are strewn with constellations. For the child this is nothing more than a gold-studded vault, for the sage it is boundless space in which worlds revolve, with their wonderful rhythms and cadences. The vision contains the eternal numbers, evoking signs and magic keys. The more thou learnest to contemplate and understand it, the farther thou shalt see its limits extend, for the same organic law governs all worlds."

The prophet of the temple commented on the sacred text. He explained that the doctrine of the word-light represents divinity *in the static condition*, in its perfect balance. He showed its triple nature, which is at once intelligence, force, and matter; spirit, soul, and body; light, word, and life. Essence, manifestation, and substance are three terms which take each other for granted. Their union constitutes the divine and intellectual principle *par excellence*, the law of the ternary unity which governs creation from above downwards.

Having thus led his disciple to the ideal centre of the universe, the generating principle of Being, the master spread him abroad in time and space in a multiple efflorescence. For a second part of the vision represents divinity *in the dynamic condition*, i.e., in active evolution; in other terms, the visible and invisible universe, the living heavens. The seven spheres attached to the seven planets symbolise seven principles, seven different states of matter and spirit, seven different worlds which each man and each humanity are forced to pass through in their evolution across a solar system. The seven genii or the seven cosmogonic gods signify the superior, directing spirits of all spheres, the off spring themselves of inevitable evolution. To an initiate of old, therefore, each great god was the symbol and patron of legions of spirits which reproduced his type in a thousand varieties, and which, from their own sphere, could exercise their action over mankind and terrestrial things. The seven genii of the vision of Hermes are the seven

Devas of India, the seven Amshapands of Persia, the seven great Angels of Chaldaea, the seven Sephiroths of the Kabbala, the seven Archangels of the Christian Apocalypse. The great septenary which enfolds the universe does not vibrate in the seven colors of the rainbow and the seven notes of the scale, only; it also manifests itself in the constitution of man, which is triple in essence, but sevenfold in its evolution.

"Thus," said the hierophant in conclusion, "thou hast reached the very threshold of the great arcanum. The divine life has appeared to thee beneath the phantoms of reality. Hermes has unfolded to thee the invisible heavens, the light of Osiris, the hidden God of the universe who breathes in millions of souls and animates thereby the wandering globes and working bodies. It is now thine to direct thy path and choose the road leading to the pure spirit. Henceforth dost thou belong *to those who have been brought back from death to life*. REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE TWO MAIN KEYS TO KNOWLEDGE. This is the first: 'The without is like the within of things; the small is like the large; there is only one law and he who works is One. In the divine economy, there is nothing either great or small.' And this is the second: 'Men are mortal gods and gods are immortal men.' Happy the man who understands these words, for he holds the key to all things. Remember that the law of mystery veils the great truth. Total knowledge can be revealed only to our brethren who have gone through the same trials as ourselves. Truth must be measured according to intelligence; it must be veiled from the feeble, whom it would madden, and concealed from the wicked, who are capable of seizing only its fragments, which they would turn into weapons of destruction. Keep it in thy heart and let it speak through thy work. Knowledge will be thy might, faith thy sword, and silence thy armor that cannot be broken."

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barque of the moon rose above the dark mirror of the Nile which died away on the horizon, like a long bluish serpent, the neophyte believed he saw the barque of Isis floating over the river of souls which it carries off towards the sun of Osiris. He remembered the *Book of the Dead*, and the meaning of all the symbols was now unveiled to his mind after what he had seen and learned; he might believe himself to be in the crepuscular kingdom of the Amenti, the mysterious interregnum between the earthly and the heavenly life, where the departed, who are at first without eyes and power of utterance, by degrees regain sight and voice. He, too, was about to undertake the great journey, the journey of the infinite, through worlds and existences. Hermes had already absolved him and judged him to be worthy. He had given him the explanation of the great enigma "One only soul, the great soul of the All, by dividing itself out, has given birth to all the souls that struggle throughout the universe." Armed with the mighty secret, he entered the barque of Isis. Rising aloft into the ether, it floated in the interstellar regions. The broad rays of a far-spreading dawn were already piercing the azure veils of the celestial horizons, and the choir of the glorious spirits, the Akhimou-Sekou, who have attained to eternal repose, was chanting: "Rise, Râ Hermakouti, sun of spirits! Those in thy barque are in exaltation. They raise exclamations in *the barque of millions of years*. The great divine cycle overflows with joy when glorifying the mighty sacred barque. Rejoicing is taking place in the mysterious chapel. Rise, Ammon-Râ Hermakouti, thou self-creating sun!" And the initiate replied proudly: "I have attained the country of truth and justification. I rise from the dead as a living god, and shine forth in the choir of the gods who dwell in heaven, for I belong to their race."

Such audacious thoughts and hopes might haunt the spirit of the adept during the night following the mystic ceremony of resurrection. The following morning, in the avenues of the temple, beneath the blinding light, that night seemed to him no more than a dream . . . though how impossible to forget . . . that first voyage into the intangible and invisible! Once again he read the inscription on the statue of Isis: "My veil no mortal hand hath raised." All the same a corner of the veil was raised, but only to fall back again, and he woke up on the earth of tombs. Ah, how far he was from the goal he had dreamed of! For the voyage on *the barque of millions of years* is a long one! But at least he had caught a faint glimpse of his final destination. Even though his vision of the other world were only a dream, a childish outline of his imagination, still obscured by the mists of earth, could he doubt that other consciousness he had felt being born in him, that mysterious *double*, that celestial ego which had appeared to him in his astral beauty

like a living form and spoken to him in his sleep? Was this a sister-soul, was it his genius, or only a reflection of his inmost spirit, a vision of his future being dimly foreshadowed? A wonder and a mystery! Surely it was a reality, and if that soul was only his own, it was the true one. What would he not do to recover it? Were he to live millions of years he would never forget that divine hour in which he had seen his other self, so pure and radiant.

The initiation was at an end, and the adept consecrated as priest of Osiris. If he was an Egyptian, he remained attached to the temple; if a foreigner, he was permitted, from time to time, to return to his own country, therein to establish the worship of Isis or to accomplish a mission.

Before leaving, however, he swore a formidable oath that he would maintain absolute silence regarding the secrets of the temple. Never would he betray to a single person what he had seen or heard, never would he reveal the doctrine of Osiris except under the triple veil of the mythological symbols or of the mysteries. Were he to violate this oath, sudden death would come to him, sooner or later, however far away he might be. Silence, however, had become the buckler of his might.

On returning to the shores of Ionia, to the turbulent town in which he formerly lived, amidst that multitude of men, a prey to mad passions, who exist like fools in their ignorance of themselves, his thoughts often flew back to Egypt and the pyramids to the temple of Amon-Râ. Then the dream of the crypt came back to memory. And just as the lotus, in that distant land, spreads out its petals on the waves of the Nile, so this white vision floated above the slimy, turbulent stream of this life.

At chosen hours, he would hear *its* voice, and it was the voice of light. Arousing throughout his being the strains of an inner music, it said to him: "The soul is a veiled light. When neglected, it flickers and dies out, but when it is fed with the holy oil of love, it shines forth like an immortal lamp."

## CHAPTER VII

### THE VISION OF HERMES



ONE day, Hermes, after reflecting on the origin of things, fell asleep. A dull torpor took possession of his body; but in proportion as the latter grew benumbed, his spirit ascended into space. Then an immense being, of indeterminate form, seemed to call him by name.

"Who art thou?" said the terrified Hermes.

"I am Osiris, the sovereign Intelligence who is able to unveil all things. What desirest thou?"

"To behold the source of beings, O divine Osiris, and to know God."

"Thou shalt be satisfied."

Immediately Hermes felt himself plunged in a delicious light. In its pellucid billows passed the ravishing forms of all beings. Suddenly, a terrifying encircling darkness descended upon him. Hermes was in a humid chaos, filled with smoke and with a heavy, rumbling sound. Then a voice rose from the abyss, the *cry of light*. At once a quick-leaping flame darted forth from the humid depths, reaching to the ethereal heights. Hermes ascended with it, and found himself again in the expanse of space. Order began to clear up chaos in the abyss; choruses of constellations spread above his head and *the voice of light* filled infinity.

"Dost thou understand what thou hast seen?" said Osiris to Hermes, bound down in his dream and suspended between earth and sky.

"No," said Hermes.

"Thou wilt now learn. Thou hast just seen what exists from all eternity. The light thou didst first see is the divine intelligence which contains all things in potentiality, enclosing the models of all beings. The darkness in which thou wast afterwards plunged is the material world on which the men of earth live. But the fire thou didst behold shooting forth from the depths, is the divine Word. God is the Father, the Word is the son, and their union is Life."

"What marvellous sense has opened out to me?" asked Hermes. "I no longer see with the eyes of the body, but with those of the spirit. How has that come to pass?"

"Child of dust," replied Osiris, "it is because the Word is in thee. That in thee which hears, sees, and acts is the Word itself, the sacred fire, the creative utterance!"

"Since things are so," said Hermes, "grant that I may see the light of the worlds; the path of souls from which man comes and to which he returns."

"Be it done according to thy desire."

Hermes became heavier than a stone and fell through space like a meteorite. Finally he reached the summit of a mountain. It was night, the earth was gloomy and deserted, and his limbs seemed as heavy as iron.

"Raise thine eyes and look!" said the voice of Osiris.

Then Hermes saw a wonderful sight. The starry heavens, stretching through infinite space, enveloped him with seven luminous spheres. In one glance, Hermes saw the seven heavens stretching above his head, tier upon tier, like seven transparent and concentric globes, the sidereal centre of which he now occupied. The milky way formed the girdle of the last. In each sphere there rolled a planet accompanied by a genius of different form, sign and light. Whilst Hermes, dazzled by the sight, was contemplating their wide-spread efflorescence and majestic movements, the voice said to him:

"Look, listen, and understand. Thou seest the seven spheres of all life. Through them is accomplished the fall and ascent of souls. The seven genii are the seven rays of the word-light. Each of them commands one sphere of the spirit, one phase of the life of souls. The one nearest to thee is the Genius of the Moon, with his disquieting smile and crown of silver sickle. He presides over births and deaths, sets free souls from bodies and draws them into his ray. Above him, pale Mercury points out the path to ascending or descending souls with his caduceus, which contains all knowledge. Higher still, shining Venus holds the mirror of love, in which souls forget and recognize them in turn. Above her, the Genius of the Sun raises the triumphal torch of eternal beauty. At a yet loftier height, Mars brandishes the sword of justice. Enthroned on the azure sphere, Jupiter holds the sceptre of supreme power, which is divine intelligence. At the boundaries of the world, beneath the signs of the Zodiac, Saturn bears the globe of universal wisdom.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### THE STORY OF THE BOOK OF THOTH

NOW Ahura was the wife of Nefer-ka-ptah, and their child was Merab; this was the name by which he was registered by the scribes in the House of Life. And Nefer-ka-ptah, though he was the son of the King, cared for naught on earth but to read the ancient records, written on papyrus in the House of Life or engraved on stone in the temples; all day and every day he studied the writings of the ancestors.

One day he went into the temple to pray to the gods, but when he saw the inscriptions on the walls he began to read them; and he forgot to pray, he forgot the gods, he forgot the priests, he forgot all that was around him until he heard laughter behind him. He looked round and a priest stood there, and from him came the laughter.

"Why laughest thou at me?" said Nefer-ka-ptah.

"Because thou readest these worthless writings," answered the priest. "If thou wouldest read writings that are worth the reading I can tell thee where the Book of Thoth lies hidden."

Then Nefer-ka-ptah was eager in his questions, and the priest replied, "Thoth wrote the Book with his own hand, and in it is all the magic in the world. If thou readest the first page, thou wilt enchant the sky, the earth, the abyss, the mountains, and the sea; thou wilt understand the language of the birds of the air, and thou wilt know what the creeping things of earth are saying, and thou wilt see the fishes from the darkest depths of the sea. And if thou readest the other page, even though thou wert dead and in the world of ghosts, thou couldest come back to earth in the form thou once hadst. And besides this, thou wilt see the sun shining in the sky with the full moon and the stars, and thou wilt behold the great shapes of the gods."



Then said Nefer-ka-ptah, "By the life of Pharaoh, that Book shall be mine. Tell me whatsoever it is that thou desirest, and I will do it for thee."

"Provide for my funeral," said the priest. "See that I am buried as a rich man, with priests and mourning women, offerings, libations, and incense. Then shall my soul rest in peace in the fields of Aalu. One hundred pieces of silver must be spent upon my burying."

Then Nefer-ka-ptah sent a fleet messenger to fetch the money, and he paid one hundred pieces of silver into the priest's hands. When the priest had taken the silver, he said to Nefer-ka-ptah:

"The Book is at Koptos in the middle of the river.  
In the middle of the river is an iron box,  
In the iron box is a bronze box,  
In the bronze box is a keté-wood box,  
In the keté-wood box is an ivory-and-ebony box,  
In the ivory-and-ebony box is a silver box,  
In the silver box is a gold box,  
And in the gold box is the Book of Thoth,  
Round about the great iron box are snakes and  
scorpions and all manner of crawling things, and  
above all there is a snake which no man can kill.  
These are set to guard the Book of Thoth."

When the priest had finished speaking, Nefer-ka-ptah ran out of the temple, for his joy was so great that he knew not where he was. He ran quickly to Ahura to tell her about the Book and that he would go to Koptos and find it.

But Ahura was very sorrowful, and said, "Go not on this journey, for trouble and grief await thee in the southern land."

She laid her hand upon Nefer-ka-ptah as though she would hold him back from the sorrow that awaited him. But he would not be restrained, and broke away from her and went to the king his father.

He told the King all that he had learned, and said, "Give me the royal barge, O my father, that I may go to the southern land with my wife Ahura and my son Merab. For the Book of Thoth I must and will have."

So the King gave orders and the royal barge was prepared, and in it Nefer-ka-ptah, Ahura, and Merab sailed up the river to the southern land as far as Koptos. When they arrived at Koptos, the high priest and all the priests of Isis of Koptos came down to the river to welcome Nefer-ka-ptah, sacrificed an ox and a goose, and poured a libation of wine to Isis of Koptos and her son Harpocrates. After this, the priests of Isis and their wives made a great feast for four days in honor of Nefer-ka-ptah and Ahura.

On the morning of the fifth day, Nefer-ka-ptah called to him a priest of Isis, a great magician learned in all the mysteries of the gods. And together they made a little magic box, like the cabin of a boat, and they made men and a great store of tackle, and put the men and the tackle in the magic cabin. Then they uttered a spell over the cabin, and the men breathed and were alive, and began to use the tackle. And Nefer-ka-ptah sank the magic cabin in the river, saying "Workmen, workmen! Work for me!" And he filled the royal barge with sand and sailed away alone, while Ahura sat on the bank of the river at Koptos, and watched and waited, for she knew that sorrow must come of this journey to the southern land.

The magic men in the magic cabin toiled all night and all day for three nights and three days along the bottom of the river; and when they stopped the royal barge stopped also, and Nefer-ka-ptah knew that he had arrived where the Book lay hidden.

He took the sand out of the royal barge and threw it into the water, and it made a gap in the river, a gap of a schoenus long and a schoenus wide; in the middle of the gap lay the iron box, and beside the box was coiled the great snake that no man can kill, and all around the box on every side to the edge of the walls of water were snakes and scorpions and all manner of crawling things.

Then Nefer-ka-ptah stood up in the royal barge, and across the water he cried to the snakes and scorpions and crawling things; a loud and terrible cry, and the words were words of magic. As soon as his voice was still, the snakes and scorpions and crawling things were still also, for they were enchanted by means of the magical words of Nefer-ka-ptah, and they could not move. Nefer-ka-ptah brought the royal barge to the edge of the gap, and he walked through the snakes and scorpions and crawling things, and they looked at him, but could not move because of the spell that was on them.

And now Nefer-ka-ptah was face to face with the snake that no man could kill, and it reared itself up ready for battle. Nefer-ka-ptah rushed upon it and cut off its head, and at once the head and body came together, each to each, and the snake that no man could kill was alive again, and ready for the fray. Again Nefer-ka-ptah rushed upon it, and so hard did he strike that the head was flung far from the body, but at once the head and body came together again, each to each, and again the snake that no man could kill was alive and ready to fight. Then Nefer-ka-ptah saw that the snake was immortal and could not be slain but must be overcome by subtle means. Again he rushed upon it and cut it in two, and very quickly he put sand on each part, so that when the head and body came together there was sand between them and they could not join, and the snake that no man could kill lay helpless before him.

Then Nefer-ka-ptah went to the great box where it stood in the gap in the middle of the river, and the snakes and scorpions and crawling things watched, but they could not stop him.

He opened the iron box and found a bronze box,  
 He opened the bronze box and found a keté-wood  
 box,  
 He opened the keté-wood box and found an ivory-  
 and-ebony box,  
 He opened the ivory-and-ebony box and found a  
 silver box,  
 He opened the silver box and found a gold box,  
 He opened the gold box and found the Book of Thoth.

He opened the Book and read a page, and at once he had enchanted the sky, the earth, the abyss, the mountains, and the sea, and he understood the language of birds, fish, and beasts. He read the second page and he saw the sun shining in the sky, with the full moon and the stars, and he saw the great shapes of the gods themselves; and so strong was the magic that the fishes came up from the darkest depths of the sea. So he knew that what the priest had told him was true.

Then he thought of Ahura waiting for him at Koptos, and he cast a magic spell upon the men that he had made, saying, "Workmen, workmen! Work for me! and take me back to the place from which I came." They toiled day and night till they came to Koptos, and there was Ahura sitting by the river, having eaten nothing and drunk nothing

since Nefer-ka-ptah went away. For she sat waiting and watching for the sorrow that was to come upon them.

But when she saw Nefer-ka-ptah returning in the royal-barge, her heart was glad and she rejoiced exceedingly. Nefer-ka-ptah came to her and put the Book of Thoth into her hands and bade her read it. When she read the first page, she enchanted the sky, the earth, the abyss, the mountains, and the sea, and she understood the language of birds, fish, and beasts; and when she read the second page, she saw the sun shining in the sky, with the full moon and the stars, and she saw the great shapes of the gods themselves; and so strong was the magic that the fishes came up from the darkest depths of the sea.

Nefer-ka-ptah now called for a piece of new papyrus and for a cup of beer; and on the papyrus he wrote all the spells that were in the Book of Thoth. Then he took the cup of beer and washed the papyrus in the beer, so that all the ink was washed off and the papyrus became as though it had never been written on. And Nefer-ka-ptah drank the beer, and at once he knew all the spells that had been written on the papyrus, for this is the method of the great magicians.

Then Nefer-ka-ptah and Ahura went to the temple of Isis and gave offerings to Isis and Harpocrates, and made a great feast, and the next day they went on board the royal barge and sailed joyfully away down the river towards the northern land.

But behold, Thoth had discovered the loss of his Book, and Thoth raged like a panther of the south, and he hastened before Ra and told him all, saying, "Nefer-ka-ptah has found my magic box and opened it, and has stolen my Book, even the Book of Thoth; he slew the guards that surrounded it, and the snake that no man can kill lay helpless before him. Avenge me, O Ra, upon Nefer-ka-ptah, son of the King of Egypt."

The majesty of Ra answered and said, "Take him and his wife and his child, and do with them as thou wilt." And now the sorrow for which Ahura watched and waited was about to come upon them, for Thoth took with him a power from Ra to give him his desire upon the stealer of his Book.

As the royal barge sailed smoothly down the river, the little boy Merab ran out from the shade of the awning and leaned over the side watching the water. And the power of Ra drew him, so that he fell into the river

and was drowned. When he fell, all the sailors on the royal barge and all the people walking on the river-bank raised a great cry, but they could not save him. Nefer-ka-ptah came out of the cabin and read a magical spell over the water, and the body of Merab came to the surface and they brought it on board the royal barge. Then Nefer-ka-ptah read another spell, and so great was its power that the dead child spoke and told Nefer-ka-ptah all that had happened among the gods, that Thoth was seeking vengeance, and that Ra had granted him his desire upon the stealer of his Book.

Nefer-ka-ptah gave command, and the royal barge returned to Koptos, that Merab might be buried there with the honor due to the son of a prince. When the funeral ceremonies were over, the royal barge sailed down the river toward the northern land. A joyful journey was it no longer, for Merab was dead, and Ahura's heart was heavy on account of the sorrow that was still to come, for the vengeance of Thoth was not yet fulfilled.

They reached the place where Merab had fallen into the water, and Ahura came out from under the shade of the awning, and she leaned over the side of the barge, and the power of Ra drew her so that she fell into the river and was drowned. When she fell, all the sailors in the royal barge and all the people walking on the river-bank raised a great cry, but they could not save her. Nefer-ka-ptah came out of the cabin and read a magical spell over the water, and the body of Ahura came to the surface, and they brought it on board the royal barge. Then Nefer-ka-ptah read another spell and so great was its power that the dead woman spoke and told Nefer-ka-ptah all that had happened among the gods, that Thoth was still seeking vengeance, and that Ra had granted him his desire upon the stealer of his Book.

Nefer-ka-ptah gave command and the royal barge returned to Koptos, that Ahura might be buried there with the honor due to the daughter of a king. When the funeral ceremonies were over, the royal barge sailed down the river towards the northern land. A sorrowful journey was it now, for Ahura and Merab were dead, and the vengeance of Thoth was not yet fulfilled.

They reached the place where Ahura and Merab had fallen into the water, and Nefer-ka-ptah felt the power of Ra drawing him. Though he struggled against it he knew that it would conquer him. He took a piece of royal linen, fine and strong, and made it into a girdle, and with it he

bound the Book of Thoth firmly to his breast, for he was resolved that Thoth should never have his Book again.

Then the power drew him yet more strongly, and he came from under the shade of the awning and threw himself into the river and was drowned. When he fell, all the sailors of the royal barge and all the people walking on the river-bank raised a great cry, but they could not save him. And when they looked for his body they could not find it. So the royal barge sailed down the river till they reached the northern land and came to Memphis, and the chiefs of the royal barge went to the king and told him all that had happened.

The king put on mourning raiment; he and his courtiers, the high priest and all the priests of Memphis, the king's army and the king's household, were clothed in mourning apparel, and they walked in procession to the haven of Memphis to the royal barge. When they came to the haven, they saw the body of Nefer-ka-ptah floating in the water beside the barge, close to the great steering-oars. And this marvel came to pass because of the magical powers of Nefer-ka-ptah; even in death he was a great magician by reason of the spells he had washed off the papyrus and drunk in the beer.

Then they drew him out of the water, and they saw the Book of Thoth bound to his breast with the girdle of royal linen. And the king gave command that they should bury Nefer-ka-ptah with the honor due to the son of a king, and that the Book of Thoth should be buried with him.

Thus was the vengeance of Thoth fulfilled, but the Book remained with Nefer-ka-ptah.

THE END

## The Emerald Tablet of Hermes

***Emerald Tablet of Hermes, History of the Tablet, History of the Tablet (largely summarised from Needham 1980, & Holmyard 1957) The Tablet probably first appeared in the West in editions of the psuedo-Aristotlean Secretum Secretorum which was actually a translation of the Kitab***

*Sirr al-Asar, a book of advice to kings which was translated into latin by Johannes Hispalensis c. 1140 and by Philip of Tripoli c.1243. Other translations of the Tablet may have been made during the same period by Plato of Tivoli and Hugh of Santalla, perhaps from different sources. The date of the Kitab Sirr al-Asar is uncertain, though c.800 has been suggested and it is not clear when the tablet became part of this work.*

### Translations

From Jabir ibn Hayyan.

0) Balinas mentions the engraving on the table in the hand of Hermes, which says:

- 1) Truth! Certainty! That in which there is no doubt!
- 2) That which is above is from that which is below, and that which is below is from that which is above, working the miracles of one.
- 3) As all things were from one.
- 4) Its father is the Sun and its mother the Moon.
- 5) The Earth carried it in her belly, and the Wind nourished it in her belly,
- 7) as Earth which shall become Fire.
- 7a) Feed the Earth from that which is subtle, with the greatest power.
- 8) It ascends from the earth to the heaven and becomes ruler over that which is above and that which is below.
- 14) And I have already explained the meaning of the whole of this in two of these books of mine.

[Holmyard 1923: 562.]

Another Arabic Version (from the German of Ruska, translated by 'Anonymous').

0) Here is that which the priest Sagijus of Nabulus has dictated concerning the entrance of Balinas into the hidden chamber... After my entrance into the chamber, where the talisman was set up, I came up to an old man sitting on a golden throne, who was holding an emerald table in one hand. And behold the following - in Syriac, the primordial language- was written thereon:

- 1) Here (is) a true explanation, concerning which there can be no doubt.

- 2) It attests: The above from the below, and the below from the above - the work of the miracle of the One.
  - 3) And things have been from this primal substance through a single act. How wonderful is this work! It is the main (principle) of the world and is its maintainer.
  - 4) Its father is the sun and its mother the moon; the
  - 5) wind has borne it in its body, and the earth has nourished it.
  - 6) the father of talismen and the protector of miracles
  - 6a) whose powers are perfect, and whose lights are confirmed (?),
  - 7) a fire that becomes earth.
  - 7a) Separate the earth from the fire, so you will attain the subtle as more inherent than the gross, with care and sagacity.
  - 8) It rises from earth to heaven, so as to draw the lights of the heights to itself, and descends to the earth; thus within it are the forces of the above and the below;
  - 9) because the light of lights within it, thus does the darkness flee before it.
  - 10) The force of forces, which overcomes every subtle thing and penetrates into everything gross.
  - 11) The structure of the microcosm is in accordance with the structure of the macrocosm.
  - 12) And accordingly proceed the knowledgeable.
  - 13) And to this aspired Hermes, who was threefold graced with wisdom.
  - 14) And this is his last book, which he concealed in the chamber.
- [Anon 1985: 24-5]

### Twelfth Century Latin

- 0) When I entered into the cave, I received the tablet zaradi, which was inscribed, from between the hands of Hermes, in which I discovered these words:
- 1) True, without falsehood, certain, most certain.
- 2) What is above is like what is below, and what is below is like that which is above. To make the miracle of the one thing.
- 3) And as all things were made from contemplation of one, so all things were born from one adaptation.
- 4) Its father is the Sun, its mother is the Moon.
- 5) The wind carried it in its womb, the earth breast fed it.
- 6) It is the father of all 'works of wonder' (Telesmi) in the world.
- 6a) Its power is complete (integra).
- 7) If cast to (turned towards- versa fuerit) earth,
- 7a) it will separate earth from fire, the subtile from the gross.



- 8) With great capacity it ascends from earth to heaven. Again it descends to earth, and takes back the power of the above and the below.
  - 9) Thus you will receive the glory of the distinctiveness of the world. All obscurity will flee from you.
  - 10) This is the whole most strong strength of all strength, for it overcomes all subtle things, and penetrates all solid things.
  - 11a) Thus was the world created.
  - 12) From this comes marvelous adaptations of which this is the procedure.
  - 13) Therefore I am called Hermes, because I have three parts of the wisdom of the whole world.
  - 14) And complete is what I had to say about the work of the Sun, from the book of Galieni Alfachimi.
- [From Latin in Steele and Singer 1928: 492.]

Translation from Aurelium Occultae Philosophorum..Georgio Beato

- 1) This is true and remote from all cover of falsehood
- 2) Whatever is below is similar to that which is above. Through this the marvels of the work of one thing are procured and perfected.
- 3) Also, as all things are made from one, by the consideration of one, so all things were made from this one, by conjunction.
- 4) The father of it is the sun, the mother the moon.
- 5) The wind bore it in the womb. Its nurse is the earth, the mother of all perfection.
- 6a) Its power is perfected.
- 7) If it is turned into earth,
- 7a) separate the earth from the fire, the subtle and thin from the crude and course, prudently, with modesty and wisdom.
- 8) This ascends from the earth into the sky and again descends from the sky to the earth, and receives the power and efficacy of things above and of things below.
- 9) By this means you will acquire the glory of the whole world, and so you will drive away all shadows and blindness.
- 10) For this by its fortitude snatches the palm from all other fortitude and power. For it is able to penetrate and subdue everything subtle and everything crude and hard.
- 11a) By this means the world was founded
- 12) and hence the marvelous conjunctions of it and admirable effects, since this is the way by which these marvels may be brought about.
- 13) And because of this they have called me Hermes Trismegistus since I have the three parts of the wisdom and Philosophy of the whole

universe.

14) My speech is finished which i have spoken concerning the solar work

[Davis 1926: 874.]

Translation of Issac Newton c. 1680.

- 1) Tis true without lying, certain & most true.
  - 2) That wch is below is like that wch is above & that wch is above is like yt wch is below to do ye miracles of one only thing.
  - 3) And as all things have been & arose from one by ye mediation of one: so all things have their birth from this one thing by adaptation.
  - 4) The Sun is its father, the moon its mother,
  - 5) the wind hath carried it in its belly, the earth its nourse.
  - 6) The father of all perfection in ye whole world is here.
  - 7) Its force or power is entire if it be converted into earth.
  - 7a) Seperate thou ye earth from ye fire, ye subtile from the gross sweetly wth great indoustry.
  - 8) It ascends from ye earth to ye heaven & again it desends to ye earth and receives ye force of things superior & inferior.
  - 9) By this means you shall have ye glory of ye whole world & thereby all obscurity shall fly from you.
  - 10) Its force is above all force. ffor it vanquishes every subtile thing & penetrates every solid thing.
  - 11a) So was ye world created.
  - 12) From this are & do come admirable adaptaions whereof ye means (Or process) is here in this.
  - 13) Hence I am called Hermes Trismegist, having the three parts of ye philosophy of ye whole world.
  - 14) That wch I have said of ye operation of ye Sun is accomplished & ended.
- [Dobbs 1988: 183-4.]

Translation from Kriegsmann (?) alledgedly from the Phoenician

- 1) I speak truly, not falsely, certainly and most truly
- 2) These things below with those above and those with these join forces again so that they produce a single thing the most wonderful of all.
- 3) And as the whole universe was brought forth from one by the word of one GOD, so also all things are regenerated perpetually from this one according to the disposition of Nature.
- 4) It has the Sun for father and the Moon for mother:
- 5) it is carried by the air as if in a womb, it is nursed by the earth.

- 6) It is the cause, this, of all perfection of all things throughout the universe.
- 6a) This will attain the highest perfection of powers
- 7) if it shall be reduced into earth
- 7a) Distribute here the earth and there the fire, thin out the density of this the suavest (suavissima) thing of all.
- 8) Ascend with the greatest sagacity of genius from the earth into the sky, and thence descend again to the earth, and recognise that the forces of things above and of things below are one,
- 9) so as to possess the glory of the whole world- and beyond this man of abject fate may have nothing further.
- 10) This thing itself presently comes forth stronger by reasons of this fortitude: it subdues all bodies surely, whether tenuous or solid, by penetrating them.
- 11a) And so everything whatsoever that the world contains was created.
- 12) Hence admirable works are accomplished which are instituted (carried out- instituuntur) according to the same mode.
- 13) To me therefor the name of Hermes Trismegistus has been awarded because I am discovered as the Teacher of the three parts of the wisdom of the world.
- 14) These then are the considerations which I have concluded ought to be written down concerning the readiest operations of the Chymic art.  
[Davis 1926: 875 slightly modified.]

From Sigismund Bacstrom (allegedly translated from Chaldean).

- 0) The Secret Works of CHIRAM ONE in essence, but three in aspect.
- 1) It is true, no lie, certain and to be depended upon,
- 2) the superior agrees with the inferior, and the inferior agrees with the superior, to effect that one truly wonderful work.
- 3) As all things owe their existence to the will of the only one, so all things owe their origin to the one only thing, the most hidden by the arrangement of the only God.
- 4) The father of that one only thing is the sun its mother is the moon,
- 5) the wind carries it in its belly; but its nurse is a spirituous earth.
- 6) That one only thing is the father of all things in the Universe.
- 6a) Its power is perfect,
- 7) after it has been united with a spirituous earth.
- 7a) Separate that spirituous earth from the dense or crude by means of a gentle heat, with much attention.
- 8) In great measure it ascends from the earth up to heaven, and descends again, newborn, on the earth, and the superior and the inferior

are increased in power.

9) By this wilt thou partake of the honours of the whole world. And Darkness will fly from thee.

10) This is the strength of all powers. With this thou wilt be able to overcome all things and transmute all what is fine and what is coarse.

11a) In this manner the world was created;

12) the arrangements to follow this road are hidden.

13) For this reason I am called Chiram Telat Mechasot, one in essence, but three in aspect. In this trinity is hidden the wisdom of the whole world.

14) It is ended now, what I have said concerning the effects of the sun. Finish of the Tabula Smaragdina.

[See Hall 1977: CLVIII,]

From Madame Blavatsky

2) What is below is like that which is above, and what is above is similar to that which is below to accomplish the wonders of the one thing.

3) As all things were produced by the mediation of one being, so all things were produced from this one by adaption.

4) Its father is the sun, its mother the moon.

6a) It is the cause of all perfection throughout the whole earth.

7) Its power is perfect if it is changed into earth.

7a) Separate the earth from the fire, the subtile from the gross, acting prudently and with judgement.

8 ) Ascend with the greatest sagacity from earth to heaven, and unite together the power of things inferior and superior;

9) thus you will possess the light of the whole world, and all obscurity will fly away from you.

10) This thing has more fortitude than fortitude itself, because it will overcome every subtile thing and penetrate every solid thing.

11a) By it the world was formed.

[Blavatsky 1972: 507.]

From Fulcanelli (translated from the French by Sieveking)

1) This is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth:-

2) As below, so above; and as above so below. With this knowledge alone you may work miracles.

3) And since all things exist in and emanate from the ONE Who is the ultimate Cause, so all things are born after their kind from this ONE.

4) The Sun is the father, the Moon the mother;

5) the wind carried it in his belly. Earth is its nurse and its guardian.

- 6) It is the Father of all things,
  - 6a) the eternal Will is contained in it.
  - 7) Here, on earth, its strength, its power remain one and undivided.
  - 7a) Earth must be separated from fire, the subtle from the dense, gently with unremitting care.
  - 8) It arises from the earth and descends from heaven; it gathers to itself the strength of things above and things below.
  - 9) By means of this one thing all the glory of the world shall be yours and all obscurity flee from you.
  - 10) It is power, strong with the strength of all power, for it will penetrate all mysteries and dispel all ignorance.
  - 11a) By it the world was created.
  - 12) From it are born manifold wonders, the means to achieving which are here given
  - 13) It is for this reason that I am called Hermes Trismegistus; for I possess the three essentials of the philosophy of the universe.
  - 14) This is the sum total of the work of the Sun.
- [Sadoul 1972: 25-6.]

From Fulcanelli, new translation

- 1) It is true without untruth, certain and most true:
- 2) that which is below is like that which is on high, and that which is on high is like that which is below; by these things are made the miracles of one thing.
- 3) And as all things are, and come from One, by the mediation of One, So all things are born from this unique thing by adaption.
- 4) The Sun is the father and the Moon the mother.
- 5) The wind carries it in its stomach. The earth is its nourisher and its receptacle.
- 6 The Father of all the Theleme of the universal world is here.
- 6a) Its force, or power, remains entire,
- 7) if it is converted into earth.
- 7a) You separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, gently with great industry.
- 8) It climbs from the earth and descends from the sky, and receives the force of things superior and things inferior.
- 9) You will have by this way, the glory of the world and all obscurity will flee from you.
- 10) It is the power strong with all power, for it will defeat every subtle thing and penetrate every solid thing
- 11a) In this way the world was created.

12) From it are born wonderful adaptations, of which the way here is given.

13) That is why I have been called Hermes Trismegistus, having the three parts of the universal philosophy.

14) This, that I have called the solar Work, is complete.

[Translated from Fulcanelli 1964: 312.]

From Idres Shah

1) The truth, certainty, truest, without untruth.

2) What is above is like what is below. What is below is like what is above. The miracle of unity is to be attained.

3) Everything is formed from the contemplation of unity, and all things come about from unity, by means of adaptation.

4) Its parents are the Sun and Moon.

5) It was borne by the wind and nurtured by the Earth.

6) Every wonder is from it

6a) and its power is complete.

7) Throw it upon earth,

7a) and earth will separate from fire. The impalpable separated from the palpable.

8) Through wisdom it rises slowly from the world to heaven. Then it descends to the world combining the power of the upper and the lower.

9) Thus you will have the illumination of all the world, and darkness will disappear.

10) This is the power of all strength- it overcomes that which is delicate and penetrates through solids.

11a) This was the means of the creation of the world.

12) And in the future wonderful developments will be made, and this is the way.

13) I am Hermes the Threefold Sage, so named because I hold the three elements of all wisdom.

14) And thus ends the revelation of the work of the Sun.

(Shah 1964: 198).

Hypothetical Chinese Original

1) True, true, with no room for doubt, certain, worthy of all trust.

2) See, the highest comes from the lowest, and the lowest from the highest; indeed a marvelous work of the tao.

3) See how all things originated from It by a single process.

4) The father of it (the elixir) is the sun (Yang), its mother the moon (Yin).

- 5) The wind bore it in its belly, and the earth nourished it.  
 6) This is the father of wondrous works (changes and transformations),  
 the guardian of mysteries,  
 6a) perfect in its powers, the animator of lights.  
 7) This fire will be poured upon the earth...  
 7a) So separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, acting  
 prudently and with art.  
 8) It ascends from the earth to the heavens (and orders the lights above),  
 then descends again to the earth; and in it is the power of the highest  
 and the lowest.  
 9) Thus when you have the light of lights darkness will flee away from  
 you.  
 10) With this power of powers (the elixir) you shall be able to get the  
 mastery of every subtle thing, and be able to penetrate everything that  
 is gross.  
 11a) In this way was the great world itself formed.  
 12) Hence thus and thus marvellous operations will be achieved.  
 [Slightly altered from Needham 1980: 371.]

## TEXTUAL REMARKS

On #3 Some Latin texts have *meditatione* (contemplation), others *mediatione* (mediation). Some texts have *adaptatione* (by adaptation), some have *adoptionis* (by adoption).

On #6 'Telesmi' is a greek word, some texts have 'thelesmi'.

On #6, 7 In some texts 'Its Power is Complete' is a separate line. In the generally accepted reading, this runs into #7 producing 'Its Power is complete if versa fuerit to earth'. Where possible this has been indicated by diving these lines in 6, 6a, 7, & 7a

On #7, 8 In some texts the 'Wisdom, capacity' (*magno ingenio*) is read as referring to #7, and hence the operation of Separation is to be carried out 'carefully', in other readings the 'wisdom' is held to refer to #8 and the product of the Separation which thus ascends with 'wisdom'.

Needham quotes Ruska to the effect that sections 3, 12 and 14 are probably late additions (op. cit)

## COMMENTARIES

**On #1**

Hortulanus: "... the most true Sun is procreated by art. And he says most true in the superlative degree because the Sun generated by this art exceeds all natural Sun in all of its properties, medicinal and otherwise" (Davis modified by 'Linden')

**On #2**

Albertus Magnus: Hermes says "the powers of all things below originate in the stars and constellations of the heavens; and that all these powers are poured down into all things below by the circle called Alaur, which is, they said, the first circle of the constellations". This descent is "noble when the materials receiving these powers are more like things above in their brightness and transparency; ignoble when the materials are confused and foul, so that the heavenly power is, as it were oppressed. Therefore they say that this is the reason why precious stones more than anything else have wonderful powers" (60 -61). While the "seven kinds of metals have their forms from the seven planets of the lower spheres" (168).

Hortulanus: "the stone is divided into two principle parts by the magistry, into a superior part which ascends above and into an inferior part which remains below fixed and clear. And these two parts moreover are concordant in their virtue since the inferior part is earth which is called nurse and ferment, and the superior part is the spirit which quickens the whole stone and raises it up. Wherefore separation made, and conjunction celebrated, many miracles are effected."

Burckhardt: "This refers to the reciprocal dependence of the active and the passive... essential form cannot be manifested without passive materia.. the efficacy of the spiritual power depends on the preparedness of the human 'container' and vice versa.... 'Above' and 'below' are thus related to this one thing and complement one another in its regard".

Schumaker: "There are corresponding planes in various levels of creation, hence it is safe to draw analogies between macrocosm and microcosm, the mineral kingdom and the human, animal and vegetable kingdoms etc".



Needham: "the whole affirmation looks remarkably like the doctrine that extreme of Yang generates Yin, and vice versa".

### **On #3**

Hortulanus: "our stone, which was created by God, was born and came forth from a confused mass, containing in itself all the elements- and hence our stone was born by this single miracle".

Trithemius: "Is it not true that all things flow from one thing, from the goodness of the One, and that whatever is joined to Unity cannot be diverse, but rather fructifies by means of the simplicity and adaptability of the One" "What is born from Unity? Is it not the ternary? Take note: Unity is unmixed, the binary is compounded, and the ternary is reduced to the simplicity of Unity. I, Trithemius, am not of three minds, but persist in a single integrated mind taking pleasure in the ternary, which gives birth to a marvelous offspring" (Bran).

Burckhardt: "the undivided, invisible Light of the unconditioned One is refracted into multiplicity by the prism of the Spirit". As the Spirit contemplates the Unity without full comprehension "it manifests the 'many-sided' All, just as a lens transmits the light it receives as a bundle of rays".

Schumaker: As God is one, all created objects come from one thing, an undifferentiated primal matter.

### **On #4**

Hortulanus: " As one animal naturally generates more animals similar to itself, so the Sun artificially generates Sun by the power of multiplication of...the stone.... in this artificial generation it is necessary that the Sun have a suitable receptacle, consonant with itself, for its sperm and its tincture, and this is the Luna of the philosophers"

Redgrove: Sun and Moon "probably stand for Spirit and Matter respectively, not gold and silver".

Burckhardt: Sun "is the spirit (nous), while the moon is the soul (psyche)".

Schumaker: "If the moon is associated with water, as because of its 'moisture' [as] was usual, and the sun with fire, the prima materia is

understood to have been generated by fire, born of water, brought down from the sky by wind, and nourished by earth".

#### On #5

Albertus Magnus: by this Hermes "means the levigatio [making light weight] of the material, raising it to the properties of Air. And why he says the wind carries the material [of the stone] in its belly is that, when the material is placed in an alembic- which is a vessel made like those in which rosewater is prepared- then by evaporation it is rendered subtle and is raised towards the properties of Air... And there distills and issues from the mouth of the alembic a watery or oily liquor with all the powers of the elements" (17). In metals the moisture is not separated from the dryness, but is dissolved in it; and being so dissolved, it moves about there as if it had been swallowed by the Earth and were moving about in its bowels. And on this account Hermes said 'The mother of metal is Earth that carries it in her belly'".

Hortulanus: "It is plain that wind is air, and air is life, and life is spirit... And thus it is necessary that the wind should bear the whole stone... [However] our stone without the ferment of the earth will never come to the effect, which ferment is called food"

Trithemius: "the wind carries its seed in her belly".

Maier: By "the wind carried him in its belly" Hermes means " 'He, whose father is the Sun, and whose mother is the Moon, will be carried before he is born, by wind and vapour, just as a flying bird is carried by air'. From the vapours of winds, which are nothing else but wind in motion, water proceeds, when condensed, and from that water, mixed with earth, all minerals and metals arise". The substance carried by the wind is "in chemical respect.. the sulphur, which is carried in mercury". Lull says "'The stone is the fire, carried in the belly of the air'. In physical respect it is the unborn child that will soon be born". To be clearer, "'All mercury is composed of vapours, that is to say of water, which the earth raises along with it into the thin air, and of earth, which the air compels to return into watery earth or earthy water" As the elements contained within are each reduced to a watery condition, they either follow the volatile elements upward as in common mercury, or they stay below with the solid elements as in philosophical Mercury "and in the solid metals". So "Mercury is the wind which receives the sulphur... as the unripe fruit from the mothers womb, or from the ashes

of the burnt mother's body and takes it to a place where it may ripen". Ripley says "our child shall be born in the air, that is the belly of the wind" [de Jong 1969: 55- 7.]

Maier (2nd Comment) on "The earth is its nurse": Food changes into the substance of the eater and is then assimilated. "This harmony dominates the whole of nature, for the like enjoys the like". The same happens in the Work and Nature "just as is the growth of the child in the mother's womb. So also a father, a mother and a nurse have been attributed to the philosophical child... it comes into being from the twofold seed and then grows as an embryo does". As a woman must moderate her diet to avoid miscarriage, "in the same way one must set about philosophical work with moderation". The Seeds also have to be united. "Philosophers say that the one comes from the East and the other from the West and become one; what does this mean but combining in a retort, a moderate temperature and nourishment?". "One may wonder why the earth is referred to as the nurse of the philosophic child, since barrenness and dryness are the main properties of the element earth". The answer is that not the element, but the whole Earth is meant. "It is the nurse of Heaven not because it resolves, washes and moistens the foetus, but because it coagulates, fastens and colours the latter and changes it into sap and blood... The Earth contains a wonderful juice which changes the nature of the one who feeds on it, as Romulus is believed to have been changed by the wolf's milk into a bellicose individual" [de Jong 1969: 63 -5.]

Burckhardt: "The wind which carries the spiritual germ in its body, is the vital breath". Vital breath is the substance of the realm between heaven and earth, it "is also Quicksilver which contains the germ of gold in a liquid state". The earth is "the body, as an inward reality".

#### **On #6**

Burckhardt: the word talisman is derived from Telesma. Talismans work by corresponding to their prototype, and by making a "condensation", on the subtle plane, of a spiritual state. This explains the similarity between the talisman, as the bearer of an invisible influence, and the alchemical elixir, as the 'ferment' of metallic transformation".

#### **On #7**

Hortulanus: The stone is perfect and complete if it is turned into earth "that is if the soul of the stone itself.... is turned into earth, namely of the stone and is fixed so that the whole substance of the stone becomes one with its nurse, namely the earth, and the whole stone is converted to ferment"

Trithemius: it is the seed from #5 that must be cast upon the earth.

Bacstrom: "Process- First Distillation".

Burckhardt: "when the Spirit is 'embodied', the volatile becomes fixed".

Schumaker: if the prime matter is to be used it must be fixed into a substance "capable of being handled".

#### **On #7a**

Hortulanus: "You will separate, that is, you will dissolve, because solution is separation of parts.."

Burckhardt: The separation "means the 'extraction' of the soul from the body".

Schumaker "Since the volatile principle is fire -or sometimes, air-stability is produced by its removal. Or, alternatively but less probably, the earth is impurity ('the gross') and a purified fire ('the subtle') is what is wanted.

#### **On #8**

Albertus Magnus: In intending to teach the operations of alchemy Hermes says the stone "'ascends to heaven' when by roasting and calcination it takes on the properties of Fire; for alchemists mean by calcinatio the reduction of material to powder by burning and roasting. And the material 'again descends from heaven to earth' when it takes on the properties of Earth by inhumatio, for inhumation revives and nourishes what was previously killed by calcination".

Hortulanus: "And now he deals with multiplication [of the stone]." "Although our stone is divided in the first operation into four parts... there are really two principle parts". The ascending, non fixed, and the earth or ferment. "It is necessary to have a large quantity of this non

fixed part and to give it to the stone which has been made thoroughly clean from dirt.... until the entire stone is borne above by the virtue of the spirit"

"Afterwards it is necessary to incerate the same stone,..with the oil that was extracted in the first operation, which oil is called the water of the stone" Roast or boil by sublimation until the "entire stone descends... and remains fixed and fluent". "That which is corporeal is made spiritual by sublimation, and that which is spiritual is made corporeal by descension".

Trithemius: "When the ternary has at last returned to itself it may, by an inner disposition and great delight, ascend from the earth to heaven, thereby receiving both superior and inferior power; thus will it be made powerful and glorious in the clarity of Unity, demonstrate its ability to bring forth every number, and put to flight all obscurity".

Bacstrom: "Last Digestion". "The Azoth ascends from the Earth, from the bottom of the Glass, and redescends in Veins and drops into the Earth and by this continual circulation the Azoth is more and more subtilised, Volatilizes Sol and carries the volatilized Solar atoms along with it and thereby becomes a Solar Azoth, i.e. our third and genuine Sophic Mercury". The circulation must continue until "it ceases of itself, and the Earth has sucked it all in, when it becomes the black pitchy matter, the Toad [the substances in the alchemical retort and also the lower elements in the body of man -Hall], which denotes complete putrifaction or Death of the compound".

Read, suggests this section describes the use of a kerotakis, in which metals are suspended and subject to the action of gasses released from substances heated in the base, and from their condensation and circulation.

Burckhardt: "dissolution of consciousness from all formal 'coagulations' is followed by the 'crystalisation' of the Spirit, so that active and passive are perfectly united."

Schumaker: "Separate the volatile part of the substance by vaporization but continue heating until the vapour reunites with the parent body, whereupon you will have obtained the Stone".

**On #9**

Trithemius: When the ternary has returned to Unity cleansed of all impurities "the mind understands without contradiction all the mysteries of the excellently arranged arcanum".

Bacstrom: the black matter becomes White and Red. The Red "having been carried to perfection, medicinally and for Metals" is capable of supporting complete mental and physical health, and provides "ample means, in finitum multiplicable to be benevolent and charitable, without any diminution of our inexhaustable resources, therefore well may it be called the Glory of the whole World". Contemplation and study of the Philosopher's Stone ("L. P.") elevates the mind to God. "The Philosophers say with great Truth, that the L.P. either finds a good man or makes one". "By invigorating the Organs the Soul makes use of for communicating with exterior objects, the Soul must acquire greater powers, not only for conception but also for retention". If we pray and have faith "all Obscurity must vanish of course".

Burckhardt: "Thus the light of the Spirit becomes constant..[and] ignorance, deception, uncertainty, doubt and foolishness will be removed from consciousness".

## **On #10**

Trithemius: The Philosopher's Stone is another name for the 'one thing', and is able to "conquer every subtile thing and to penetrate every solid". "This very noble virtue... consists of maximal fortitude, touching everything with its desirable excellence."

Bacstrom: "The L.P. does possess all the Powers concealed in Nature, not for destruction but for exhaltation and regeneration of matter, in the three Departments of Nature". "It refixes the most subtil Oxygen into its own firey Nature". The power increases "in a tenfold ratio, at every multiplication". So it can penetrate Gold and Silver, and fix mercury, Crystals and Glass Fluxes.

Burckhardt: "Alchemical fixation is nevertheless more inward... Through its union with the spirit bodily consciousness itself becomes a fine and penetrating power". He quotes Jabir "The body becomes a spirit, and takes on... fineness, lightness, extensibility, coloration... The spirit... becomes a body and acquires the latter's resistance to fire, immobility and duration. From both bodies a light substance is born , which.. precisely takes up a middle position between the two extremes".

Schumaker: The product of the distillation and reunion will "dominate less solid substances, but because of its own subtlety it will 'penetrate' and hence dominate, other solid things less pure and quasi-spiritual than itself".

#### **On #11**

Burckhardt: "the little world is created according to the prototype of the great world", when the human realises their original nature is the image of God.

Schumaker: "The alchemical operation is a paradigm of the creative process. We may note the sexual overtones of what has preceeded"

#### **On #12**

Burckhardt: "In the Arabic text this is: "This way is traversed by the sages".

#### **On #13**

Hortulanus: "He here teaches in an occult manner the things from which the stone is made." "the stone is called perfect because it has in itself the nature of minerals, ofvegetables and of animals. For the stone is three and one, tripple and single, having four natures.... and three colours, namely black, white and red. It is also called the grain of corn because unless it shall have died, it remains itself alone. And if it shall have died... it bears much fruit when it is in conjunction..."

Newton: "on account of this art Mercurius is called thrice greatest, having three parts of the philosophy of the whole world, since he signifies the Mercury of the philosophers.... and has dominion in the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, and the animal kingdom".

Bacstrom: the wisdom of the world (?) is hidden in "Chiram and its Use". Hermes "signifies a Serpent, and the Serpent used to be an Emblem of Knowledge or Wisdom."

Burckhardt: "The three parts of wisdom correspond to the three great divisions of the universe, namely, the spiritual, psychic and corporeal realms, whose symbols are heaven, air and earth".

Schumaker: "The usual explanation of Trismegistus.. is that Hermes was the greatest philosopher, the greatest priest, and the greatest king".

## General

Trithemius: "our philosophy is celestial, not worldly, in order that we may faithfully behold, by means of a direct intuition of the mind through faith and knowledge, that principle which we call God...."

Trithemius: "Study generates knowledge; knowledge prepares love; love, similarity; similarity, communion; communion, virtue; virtue, dignity; dignity, power; and power performs the miracle".

Newton "Inferior and superior, fixed and volatile, sulphur and quicksilver have a similar nature and are one thing, like man and wife. For they differ from one another only by degree of digestion and maturity. Sulphur is mature quicksilver, and quicksilver is immature sulphur: and on account of this affinity they unite like male and female, and they act on each other, and through that action they are mutually transmuted into each other and procreate a more noble offspring to accomplish the miracles of this one thing". "And just as all things were created from one Chaos by the design of one God, so in our art all things... are born from this one thing which is our Chaos, by the design of the Artificer and the skilful adaptation of things. And the generation of this is similar to the human, truly from a father and mother".

Blavatsky: the mysterious thing "is the universal, magical agent, the astral light, which in the correlations of its forces furnishes the alkahest, the philosopher's stone, and the elixir of life. Hermetic philosophy names it Azoth, the soul of the world, the celestial virgin, the great Magnes, etc" It appears to be that which gives organisation ("the maze of force-correlations"), and form i.e. the perfect geometry of snowflakes.

Sherwood Taylor: "the operation of the Sun.. was carried out by a 'spirit', universal, the source of all things, having the power of perfecting them. Its virtue is integral [# 6a] (ie having the power to convert the diverse into a single substance), if it be turned into earth (ie. solidified). This conveyed that the Stone was to be a solidified pneuma. Pneuma was the link between earth and heaven, having the virtue of the celestial and subterranean regions- the power of the whole cosmos from the fixed stars to the centre of the earth. It overcomes every nature and penetrates every solid. It is the source of the whole world and so it can be the means of changing things in a wonderful way. The three



parts of the philosophy of the whole world are presumably of the celestial, terrestrial, and subterranean regions".

Shah: The table is "the same as the Sufi dictum... 'Man is the microcosm, creation the macrocosm - the unity. All comes from One. By the joining of the power of contemplation all can be attained. This essence must be separated from the body first, then combined with the body. This is the Work. Start with yourself, end with all. Before man, beyond man, transformation".

### **A COMMENTARY OF IBN UMAIL**

HERMUS said the secret of everything and the life of everything is Water.... This water becomes in wheat, ferment; in the vine, wine; in the olive, olive oil.... The beginning of the child is from water.... Regarding this spiritual water and the sanctified and thirsty earth, HERMUS the great, crowned with the glorious wisdom and the sublime sciences, said [#1] Truth it is, indubitable, certain and correct, [#2] that the High is from the Low and the Low is from the High. They bring about wonders through the one, just as things are produced from that one essence by a single preparation. Later by his statement [#4] Its father is the Sun and its mother the Moon he meant their male and their female. They are the two birds which are linked together in the pictures given regarding the beginning of the operation, and from them the spiritual tinctures are produced. And similarly they are at the end of the operation. Later in his statement [#7 ?] the subtle is more honourable than the gross, he means by the subtle the divine spiritual water; and by the gross the earthly body. As for his later statement [#8] with gentleness and wisdom it will ascend from the earth to the sky, and will take fire from the higher lights, he means by this the distillation and the raising of the water into the air. As for his later statement [#8a] It will descend to the earth, containing the strength of the high and the low, he means by this the breathing in (istinshaq) of the air, and the taking of the spirit from it, and its subsequent elevation to the highest degree of heat, and it is the Fire, and the low is the body, and its content of the controlling earthly power which imparts the colours. For there lie in it those higher powers, as well as the earthly powers which were submerged in it.

The natural operation and decay causes it to be manifest, and hence the strength of the earth, and of the air, and of the higher fire passed in to it. Later he said [#9] it will overcome the high and the low because it in it is found the light of lights: and consequently the darkness will flee from it. [See Stapleton et al. p 74, 81.]

## APPENDIX

Translation from Roger Bacon's edition of *Secretum Secretorum* made c 1445

- 1) Trouth hath hym so, and it is no doubt,
- 2) that the lower is to the heigher, and the heigher to the lower aunsweren. The worcher forsoth of all myracles is the one and sool God, of and fro Whom Cometh all meruelous operacions.
- 3) So all thynges were created of o soole substance, and of o soole disposicion,
- 4 ) the fader wherof is the sone, and the moone moder,
- 5) that brought hym forth by blast or aier in the wombe, the erthe taken fro it,
- 6) to whom is seid the increat fader, tresour of myracles, and yever of vertues.
- 7) Of fire is made erthe.
- 7a) Depart the erthe fro the fire, for the sotiller is worthier than the more grosse, and the thynne thyng than the thik. This most be do wisely and discretly.
- 8) It ascendith fro the erth into the heven, and falleth fro heven to the erthe, and therof sleith the higher and the lower vertue.
- 9) And yf it lordship in the lower and in the heigher, and thow shalt lordship aboue and beneth, which forsoth is the light of lightes, and therfor fro the wolle fle all derknesse.
- 10) The higher vertue ouer-cometh all, for sothe all thynne thyng doth in dense thynges.
- 11a) After the disposicion of the more world rynneth this worchyng.
- 13) And for this prophetisying of the trynnye of God Hermogenes it called Triplex, trebil in philosophie, as Aristotle seith.

[See Manzalaoui 1977: 65 -6.]

Translation of same source, made c. 1485.

- 1) The trwthe is so, and that it is no dowght,
- 2) that lower thyngis to hyer thyng, and hyer to lower be correspondent. But the Werker of myraclis is on Godde alone, fro Home descendyth euiry meruulus werk.
- 3) And so alle thyngis be creat of one only substauns, be an only dysposicion,
- 4) of home the fadyr is the sonne, and the mone the modyr,

5 ) qwyche bar her be the wedyr in the wombe. The erthe is priuyd fro her-to.

6 )This is clepyd or seyde the fadyr of enchauntmentis, tresur of myracclis, the yessuer of vertuys.

7) Be a lytil it is made erthe.

7a) Depart that qwyche is erthly fro that qwyche is fi Fry, for that qwyche is sotel is mor wurthy han that qwyche is grose, and that rar, porous, or lyght, is mor bettyr than qwyche is thyk of substauns. This is done wysely or dyscretly.

8) It ascendyth fro the erth in-to heuyn and fallyth fro heuyn in-to erth, and ther-of it sleth the ouyr vertu and the nedyr vertu, so it hath lorchyp in the lowe thyngis and hye thingis,

9) and thu lordschyppest vppeward and downward, and with the is the lyght of lyghtys. And for that alle derkness schal fle fro the.

10) The ouyr vetu ouircomyth alle, for euiry rar rhyng werkyth in to euiry thyk thyng.

11a) And aftyr the dysposicion of the mor world rennyth thys werking.

13) And for that Hermogines is clepyd threhold in filosofhye, and of the meruellys of he world.

[See Manzalaoui 1977: 174-5]

## Corpus Hermeticum

*The Corpus Hermeticum, the core documents of the Hermetic tradition. Dating from early in the Christian era, they were mistakenly dated to a much earlier period by Church officials (and everyone else) up until the 15th century. Because of this, they were allowed to survive and we seen as an early precursor to what was to be Christianity. We know today that they were, in fact, from the early Christian era, and came out of the turbulent religious seas of Hellenic Egypt. These are all taken from Mead's translations.*

**An Introduction to the Corpus Hermeticum**

**by John Michael Greer**

The fifteen tractates of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, along with the *Perfect Sermon* or *Asclepius*, are the foundation documents of the Hermetic tradition. Written by unknown authors in Egypt sometime before the end of the third century C.E., they were part of a once substantial literature attributed to the mythic figure of Hermes Trismegistus, a Hellenistic fusion of the Greek god Hermes and the Egyptian god Thoth.

This literature came out of the same religious and philosophical ferment that produced Neoplatonism, Christianity, and the diverse collection of teachings usually lumped together under the label "Gnosticism": a ferment which had its roots in the impact of Platonic thought on the older traditions of the Hellenized East. There are obvious connections and common themes linking each of these traditions, although each had its own answer to the major questions of the time.

The treatises we now call the *Corpus Hermeticum* were collected into a single volume in Byzantine times, and a copy of this volume survived to come into the hands of Lorenzo de Medici's agents in the fifteenth century. Marsilio Ficino, the head of the Florentine Academy, was pulled off the task of translating the dialogues of Plato in order to put the *Corpus Hermeticum* into Latin first. His translation saw print in 1463, and was reprinted at least twenty-two times over the next century and a half.

The treatises divide up into several groups. The first (CH I), the "Poemandres", is the account of a revelation given to Hermes Trismegistus by the being Poemandres or "Man-Shepherd", an expression of the universal Mind. The next eight (CH II-IX), the "General Sermons", are short dialogues or lectures discussing various basic points of Hermetic philosophy. There follows the "Key" (CH X), a summary of the General Sermons, and after this a set of four tractates - "Mind unto Hermes", "About the Common Mind", "The Secret Sermon on the Mountain", and the "Letter of Hermes to Asclepius" (CH XI-XIV) - touching on the more mystical aspects of Hermeticism. The collection is rounded off by the "Definitions of Asclepius unto King Ammon" (CH XV), which may be composed of three fragments of longer works.

#### *The Perfect Sermon*

The *Perfect Sermon* or *Asclepius*, which is also included here, reached the Renaissance by a different route. It was translated into Latin in ancient

times, reputedly by the same Lucius Apuleius of Madaura whose comic-serious masterpiece *The Golden Ass* provides some of the best surviving evidence on the worship of Isis in the Roman world. Augustine of Hippo quotes from the old Latin translation at length in his *City of God*, and copies remained in circulation in medieval Europe all the way up to the Renaissance. The original Greek version was lost, although quotations survive in several ancient sources.

The Perfect Sermon is substantially longer than any other surviving work of ancient Hermetic philosophy. It covers topics which also occur in the *Corpus Hermeticum*, but touches on several other issues as well - among them magical processes for the manufacture of gods and a long and gloomy prophecy of the decline of Hermetic wisdom and the end of the world.

### *The Significance of the Hermetic Writings*

The *Corpus Hermeticum* landed like a well-aimed bomb amid the philosophical systems of late medieval Europe. Quotations from the Hermetic literature in the Church Fathers (who were never shy of leaning on pagan sources to prove a point) accepted a traditional chronology which dated "Hermes Trismegistus," as a historical figure, to the time of Moses. As a result, the Hermetic tractates' borrowings from Jewish scripture and Platonic philosophy were seen, in the Renaissance, as evidence that the *Corpus Hermeticum* had anticipated and influenced both. The Hermetic philosophy was seen as a primordial wisdom tradition, identified with the "Wisdom of the Egyptians" mentioned in *Exodus* and lauded in Platonic dialogues such as the *Timaeus*. It thus served as a useful club in the hands of intellectual rebels who sought to break the stranglehold of Aristotelian scholasticism on the universities at this time.

It also provided one of the most important weapons to another major rebellion of the age - the attempt to reestablish magic as a socially acceptable spiritual path in the Christian West. Another body of literature attributed to Hermes Trismegistus was made up of astrological, alchemical and magical texts. If, as the scholars of the Renaissance believed, Hermes was a historical person who had written all these things, and if Church Fathers had quoted his philosophical works with approval, and if those same works could be shown to be wholly in keeping with some definitions of Christianity, then the whole

structure of magical Hermeticism could be given a second-hand legitimacy in a Christian context.

This didn't work, of course; the radical redefinition of Western Christianity that took place in the Reformation and Counter-Reformation hardened doctrinal barriers to the point that people were being burned in the sixteenth century for practices that were considered evidences of devoutness in the fourteenth. The attempt, though, made the language and concepts of the Hermetic tractates central to much of post-medieval magic in the West.

### *The Translation*

The translation of the *Corpus Hermeticum* and *Perfect Sermon* given here is that of G.R.S. Mead (1863-1933), originally published as Vol. 2 of his *Thrice Greatest Hermes* (London, 1906). Mead was a close associate of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the founder and moving spirit of the Theosophical Society, and most of his considerable scholarly output was brought out under Theosophical auspices. The result, predictably, was that most of that output has effectively been blacklisted in academic circles ever since.

This is unfortunate, for Mead's translations of the Hermetic literature were until quite recently the best available in English. (They are still the best in the public domain; thus their use here.) The Everard translation of 1650, which is still in print, reflects the state of scholarship at the time it was made - which is only a criticism because a few things have been learned since then! The Walter Scott translation - despite the cover blurb on the recent Shambhala reprint, this is not the Sir Walter Scott of *Ivanhoe* fame - while more recent than Mead's, is a product of the "New Criticism" of the first half of this century, and garbles the text severely; scholars of Hermeticism of the caliber of Dame Frances Yates have labeled the Scott translation worthless. By contrast, a comparison of Mead's version to the excellent modern translation by Brian Copenhaver, or to the translations of CH I (Poemandres) and VII (The Greatest Ill Among Men is Ignorance of God) given in Bentley Layton's *The Gnostic Scriptures*, shows Mead as a capable translator, with a usually solid grasp of the meaning of these sometimes obscure texts.

There is admittedly one problem with Mead's translation: the aesthetics of the English text. Mead hoped, as he mentioned at the beginning of *Thrice Greatest Hermes*, to "render...these beautiful theosophic treatises

into an English that might, perhaps, be thought in some small way worthy of the Greek originals." Unfortunately for this ambition, he was writing at a time when the last remnants of the florid and pompous Victorian style were fighting it out with the more straightforward colloquial prose that became the style of the new century. Caught in this tangle like so many writers of the time, Mead wanted to write in the grand style but apparently didn't know how. The result is a sometimes bizarre mishmash in which turn-of-the-century slang stands cheek by jowl with overblown phrases in King James Bible diction, and in which mishandled archaisms, inverted word order, and poetic contractions render the text less than graceful - and occasionally less than readable. Seen from a late twentieth century sensibility, the result verges on unintentional self-parody in places: for example, where Mead uses the Scots contraction "ta'en" (for "taken"), apparently for sheer poetic color, calling up an image of Hermes Trismegistus in kilt and sporran.

The "poetic" word order is probably the most serious barrier to readability; it's a good rule, whenever the translation seems to descend into gibberish, to try shuffling the words of the sentence in question. It may also be worth noting that Mead consistently uses "for that" in place of "because" and "aught" in place of "any", and leaves out the word "the" more or less at random.

Finally, comments in (parentheses) and in [square brackets] are in Mead's original; those in <angle brackets> are my own additions.

## **The Corpus Hermeticum**

**translated by G.R.S. Mead**

### **I. Poemandres, the Shepherd of Men**

This is the most famous of the Hermetic documents, a revelation account describing a vision of the creation of the universe and the nature and fate of humanity. Authors from the Renaissance onward have been struck by the way in which its creation myth seems partly inspired by *Genesis*, partly reacting against it. The Fall has here become the descent of the Primal Man through the spheres of the planets to the world of Nature, a descent caused not by disobedience but by love, and done with the blessing of God.

The seven rulers of fate discussed in sections 9, 14 and 25 are the archons of the seven planets, which also appear in Plato's *Timaeus* and in a number of the ancient writings usually lumped together as "Gnostic". Their role here is an oddly ambivalent one, powers of Harmony who are nonetheless the sources of humanity's tendencies to evil.

1. It chanced once on a time my mind was meditating on the things that are, my thought was raised to a great height, the senses of my body being held back - just as men who are weighed down with sleep after a fill of food, or from fatigue of body.

Methought a Being more than vast, in size beyond all bounds, called out my name and saith: What wouldst thou hear and see, and what hast thou in mind to learn and know?

2. And I do say: Who art thou?

He saith: I am Man-Shepherd (Poemandres), Mind of all-masterhood; I know what thou desirest and I'm with thee everywhere.

3. [And] I reply: I long to learn the things that are, and comprehend their nature, and know God. This is, I said, what I desire to hear.

He answered back to me: Hold in thy mind all thou wouldst know, and I will teach thee.

4. E'en with these words His aspect changed, and straightway, in the twinkling of an eye, all things were opened to me, and I see a Vision limitless, all things turned into Light - sweet, joyous [Light]. And I became transported as I gazed.

But in a little while Darkness came settling down on part [of it], awesome and gloomy, coiling in sinuous folds, so that methought it like unto a snake.

And then the Darkness changed into some sort of a Moist Nature, tossed about beyond all power of words, belching out smoke as from a fire, and groaning forth a wailing sound that beggars all description.



[And] after that an outcry inarticulate came forth from it, as though it were a Voice of Fire.

5. [Thereon] out of the Light [...] a Holy Word (Logos) descended on that Nature. And upwards to the height from the Moist Nature leaped forth pure Fire; light was it, swift and active too.

The Air, too, being light, followed after the Fire; from out of the Earth-and-Water rising up to Fire so that it seemed to hang therefrom.

But Earth-and-Water stayed so mingled with each other, that Earth from Water no one could discern. Yet were they moved to hear by reason of the Spirit-Word (Logos) pervading them.

6. Then saith to me Man-Shepherd: Didst understand this Vision what it means?

Nay; that shall I know, said I.

That Light, He said, am I, thy God, Mind, prior to Moist Nature which appeared from Darkness; the Light-Word (Logos) [that appeared] from Mind is Son of God.

What then? - say I.

Know that what sees in thee and hears is the Lord's Word (Logos); but Mind is Father-God. Not separate are they the one from other; just in their union [rather] is it Life consists.

Thanks be to Thee, I said.

So, understand the Light [He answered], and make friends with it.

7. And speaking thus He gazed for long into my eyes, so that I trembled at the look of him.

But when He raised His head, I see in Mind the Light, [but] now in Powers no man could number, and Cosmos grown beyond all bounds, and that the Fire was compassed round about by a most mighty Power, and [now] subdued had come unto a stand.

And when I saw these things I understood by reason of Man-Shepherd's Word (Logos).

8. But as I was in great astonishment, He saith to me again: Thou didst behold in Mind the Archetypal Form whose being is before beginning without end. Thus spake to me Man-Shepherd.

And I say: Whence then have Nature's elements their being?

To this He answer gives: From Will of God. [Nature] received the Word (Logos), and gazing upon the Cosmos Beautiful did copy it, making herself into a cosmos, by means of her own elements and by the births of souls.

9. And God-the-Mind, being male and female both, as Light and Life subsisting, brought forth another Mind to give things form, who, God as he was of Fire and Spirit, formed Seven Rulers who enclose the cosmos that the sense perceives. Men call their ruling Fate.

10. Straightway from out the downward elements God's Reason (Logos) leaped up to Nature's pure formation, and was at-oned with the Formative Mind; for it was co-essential with it. And Nature's downward elements were thus left reason-less, so as to be pure matter.

11. Then the Formative Mind ([at-oned] with Reason), he who surrounds the spheres and spins them with his whorl, set turning his formations, and let them turn from a beginning boundless unto an endless end. For that the circulation of these [spheres] begins where it doth end, as Mind doth will.

And from the downward elements Nature brought forth lives reason-less; for He did not extend the Reason (Logos) [to them]. The Air brought forth things winged; the Water things that swim, and Earth-and-Water one from another parted, as Mind willed. And from her bosom Earth produced what lives she had, four-footed things and reptiles, beasts wild and tame.

12. But All-Father Mind, being Life and Light, did bring forth Man co-equal to Himself, with whom He fell in love, as being His own child; for he was beautiful beyond compare, the Image of his Sire. In very truth,

God fell in love with his own Form; and on him did bestow all of His own formations.

13. And when he gazed upon what the Enformer had created in the Father, [Man] too wished to enform; and [so] assent was given him by the Father.

Changing his state to the formative sphere, in that he was to have his whole authority, he gazed upon his Brother's creatures. They fell in love with him, and gave him each a share of his own ordering.

And after that he had well learned their essence and had become a sharer in their nature, he had a mind to break right through the Boundary of their spheres, and to subdue the might of that which pressed upon the Fire.

14. So he who hath the whole authority o'er [all] the mortals in the cosmos and o'er its lives irrational, bent his face downwards through the Harmony, breaking right through its strength, and showed to downward Nature God's fair form.

And when she saw that Form of beauty which can never satiate, and him who [now] possessed within himself each single energy of [all seven] Rulers as well as God's own Form, she smiled with love; for 'twas as though she'd seen the image of Man's fairest form upon her Water, his shadow on her Earth.

He in turn beholding the form like to himself, existing in her, in her Water, loved it and willed to live in it; and with the will came act, and [so] he vivified the form devoid of reason.

And Nature took the object of her love and wound herself completely around him, and they were intermingled, for they were lovers.

15. And this is why beyond all creatures on the earth man is twofold; mortal because of body, but because of the essential man immortal.

Though deathless and possessed of sway o'er all, yet doth he suffer as a mortal doth, subject to Fate.

Thus though above the Harmony, within the Harmony he hath become a slave. Though male-female, as from a Father male-female, and though he's sleepless from a sleepless [Sire], yet is he overcome [by sleep].

16. Thereon [I say: Teach on], O Mind of me, for I myself as well am amorous of the Word (Logos).

The Shepherd said: This is the mystery kept hid until this day.

Nature embraced by Man brought forth a wonder, oh so wonderful. For as he had the nature of the Concord of the Seven, who, as I said to thee, [were made] of Fire and Spirit - Nature delayed not, but immediately brought forth seven "men", in correspondence with the natures of the Seven, male-female and moving in the air.

Thereon [I said]: O Shepherd, ..., for now I'm filled with great desire and long to hear; do not run off.

The Shepherd said: Keep silence, for not as yet have I unrolled for thee the first discourse (logoi).

Lo! I am still, I said.

17. In such wise than, as I have said, the generation of these seven came to pass. Earth was as woman, her Water filled with longing; ripeness she took from Fire, spirit from Aether. Nature thus brought forth frames to suit the form of Man.

And Man from Light and Life changed into soul and mind - from Life to soul, from Light to mind.

And thus continued all the sense-world's parts until the period of their end and new beginnings.

18. Now listen to the rest of the discourse (Logos) which thou dost long to hear.

The period being ended, the bond that bound them all was loosened by God's Will. For all the animals being male-female, at the same time with Man were loosed apart; some became partly male, some in like fashion [partly] female. And straightway God spake by His Holy Word (Logos):

"Increase ye in increasing, and multiply in multitude, ye creatures and creations all; and man that hath Mind in him, let him learn to know that he himself is deathless, and that the cause of death is love, though Love is all."

19. When He said this, His Forethought did by means of Fate and Harmony effect their couplings and their generations founded. And so all things were multiplied according to their kind.

And he who thus hath learned to know himself, hath reached that Good which doth transcend abundance; but he who through a love that leads astray, expends his love upon his body - he stays in Darkness wandering, and suffering through his senses things of Death.

20. What is the so great fault, said I, the ignorant commit, that they should be deprived of deathlessness?

Thou seem'st, He said, O thou, not to have given heed to what thou heardest. Did I not bid thee think?

Yea do I think, and I remember, and therefore give Thee thanks.

If thou didst think [thereon], [said He], tell me: Why do they merit death who are in Death?

It is because the gloomy Darkness is the root and base of the material frame; from it came the Moist Nature; from this the body in the sense-world was composed; and from this [body] Death doth the Water drain.

21. Right was thy thought, O thou! But how doth "he who knows himself, go unto Him", as God's Word (Logos) hath declared?

And I reply: the Father of the universals doth consist of Light and Life, from Him Man was born.

Thou sayest well, [thus] speaking. Light and Life is Father-God, and from Him Man was born.

If then thou learnest that thou art thyself of Life and Light, and that thou [happen'st] to be out of them, thou shalt return again to Life. Thus did Man-Shepherd speak.

But tell me further, Mind of me, I cried, how shall I come to Life again...for God doth say: "The man who hath Mind in him, let him learn to know that he himself [is deathless]."

22. Have not all men then Mind?

Thou sayest well, O thou, thus speaking. I, Mind, myself am present with holy men and good, the pure and merciful, men who live piously.

[To such] my presence doth become an aid, and straightway they gain gnosis of all things, and win the Father's love by their pure lives, and give Him thanks, invoking on Him blessings, and chanting hymns, intent on Him with ardent love.

And ere they give up the body unto its proper death, they turn them with disgust from its sensations, from knowledge of what things they operate. Nay, it is I, the Mind, that will not let the operations which befall the body, work to their [natural] end. For being door-keeper I'll close up [all] the entrances, and cut the mental actions off which base and evil energies induce.

23. But to the Mind-less ones, the wicked and depraved, the envious and covetous, and those who mured do and love impiety, I am far off, yielding my place to the Avenging Daimon, who sharpening the fire, tormenteth him and addeth fire to fire upon him, and rusheth upon him through his senses, thus rendering him readier for transgressions of the law, so that he meets with greater torment; nor doth he ever cease to have desire for appetites inordinate, insatiately striving in the dark.

24. Well hast thou taught me all, as I desired, O Mind. And now, pray, tell me further of the nature of the Way Above as now it is [for me].

To this Man-Shepherd said: When the material body is to be dissolved, first thou surrenderest the body by itself unto the work of change, and thus the form thou hadst doth vanish, and thou surrenderest thy way of life, void of its energy, unto the Daimon. The body's senses next pass back into their sources, becoming separate, and resurrect as energies; and passion and desire withdraw unto that nature which is void of reason.

25. And thus it is that man doth speed his way thereafter upwards through the Harmony.

To the first zone he gives the Energy of Growth and Waning; unto the second [zone], Device of Evils [now] de-energized; unto the third, the Guile of the Desires de-energized; unto the fourth, his Domineering Arrogance, [also] de-energized; unto the fifth, unholy Daring and the Rashness of Audacity, de-energized; unto the sixth, Striving for Wealth by evil means, deprived of its aggrandizement; and to the seventh zone, Ensnaring Falsehood, de-energized.

26. And then, with all the energisings of the harmony stript from him, clothed in his proper Power, he cometh to that Nature which belongs unto the Eighth, and there with those-that-are hymneth the Father.

They who are there welcome his coming there with joy; and he, made like to them that sojourn there, doth further hear the Powers who are above the Nature that belongs unto the Eighth, singing their songs of praise to God in language of their own.

And then they, in a band, go to the Father home; of their own selves they make surrender of themselves to Powers, and [thus] becoming Powers they are in God. This the good end for those who have gained Gnosis - to be made one with God.

Why shouldst thou then delay? Must it not be, since thou hast all received, that thou shouldst to the worthy point the way, in order that through thee the race of mortal kind may by [thy] God be saved?

27. This when He'd said, Man-Shepherd mingled with the Powers.

But I, with thanks and belssings unto the Father of the universal [Powers], was freed, full of the power he had poured into me, and full of what He'd taught me of the nature of the All and of the loftiest Vision.

And I began to preach unto men the Beauty of Devotion and of Gnosis:

O ye people, earth-born folk, ye who have given yourselves to drunkenness and sleep and ignorance of God, be sober now, cease from your surfeit, cease to be glamourous by irrational sleep!

28. And when they heard, they came with one accord. Whereon I say:

Ye earth-born folk, why have ye given yourselves up to Death, while yet ye have the power of sharing Deathlessness? Repent, O ye, who walk with Error arm in arm and make of Ignorance the sharer of your board; get ye out from the light of Darkness, and take your part in Deathlessness, forsake Destruction!

29. And some of them with jests upon their lips departed [from me], abandoning themselves unto the Way of Death; others entreated to be taught, casting themselves before my feet.

But I made them arise, and I became a leader of the Race towards home, teaching the words (logoi), how and in what way they shall be saved. I sowed in them the words (logoi) of wisdom; of Deathless Water were they given to drink.

And when even was come and all sun's beams began to set, I bade them all give thanks to God. And when they had brought to an end the giving of their thanks, each man returned to his own resting place.

30. But I recorded in my heart Man-Shepherd's benefaction, and with my every hope fulfilled more than rejoiced. For body's sleep became the soul's awakening, and closing of the eyes - true vision, pregnant with Good my silence, and the utterance of my word (logos) begetting of good things.

All this befell me from my Mind, that is Man-Shepherd, Word (Logos) of all masterhood, by whom being God-inspired I came unto the Plain of Truth. Wherefore with all my soul and strength thanksgiving give I unto Father-God.

31. Holy art Thou, O God, the universals' Father.

Holy art Thou, O God, whose Will perfects itself by means of its own Powers.

Holy art Thou, O God, who willeth to be known and art known by Thine own.



Holy art Thou, who didst by Word (Logos) make to consist the things that are.

Holy art Thou, of whom All-nature hath been made an image.

Holy art Thou, whose Form Nature hath never made.

Holy art Thou, more powerful than all power.

Holy art Thou, transcending all pre-eminence.

Holy Thou art, Thou better than all praise.

Accept my reason's offerings pure, from soul and heart for aye stretched up to Thee, O Thou unutterable, unspeakable, Whose Name naught but the Silence can express.

32. Give ear to me who pray that I may ne'er of Gnosis fail, [Gnosis] which is our common being's nature; and fill me with Thy Power, and with this Grace [of Thine], that I may give the Light to those in ignorance of the Race, my Brethren, and Thy Sons.

For this cause I believe, and I bear witness; I go to Life and Light. Blessed art Thou, O Father. Thy Man would holy be as Thou art holy, e'en as Thou gave him Thy full authority [to be].

## II. To Asclepius

This dialogue sets forth the difference between the physical and metaphysical worlds in the context of Greek natural philosophy. Some of the language is fairly technical: the "errant spheres" of sections 6 and 7 are the celestial spheres carrying the planets, while the "inerrant sphere" is that of the fixed stars. It's useful to keep in mind, also, that "air" and "spirit" are interchangeable concepts in Greek thought, and that the concept of the Good has a range of implications which don't come across in the English word: one is that the good of any being, in Greek thought, was also that being's necessary goal.

The criticism of childlessness in section 17 should probably be read as a response to the Christian ideal of celibacy, which horrified many people in the ancient world.

1. Hermes: All that is moved, Asclepius, is it not moved in something and by something?

Asclepius: Assuredly.

H: And must not that in which it's moved be greater than the moved?

A: It must.

H: Mover, again, has greater power than moved?

A: It has, of course.

H: The nature, furthermore, of that in which it's moved must be quite other from the nature of the moved?

A: It must completely.

2. H: Is not, again, this cosmos vast, [so vast] that than it there exists no body greater?

A: Assuredly.

H: And massive, too, for it is crammed with multitudes of other mighty frames, nay, rather all the other bodies that there are?

A: It is.

H: And yet the cosmos is a body?

A: It is a body.

H: And one that's moved?

3. A: Assuredly.

H: Of what size, then, must be the space in which it's moved, and of what kind [must be] the nature [of that space]? Must it not be far vaster [than the cosmos], in order that it may be able to find room for its

continued course, so that the moved may not be cramped for want of room and lose its motion?

A: Something, Thrice-greatest one, it needs must be, immensely vast.

4. H: And of what nature? Must it not be, Asclepius, of just the contrary? And is not contrary to body bodiless?

A: Agreed.

H: Space, then, is bodiless. But bodiless must either be some godlike thing or God [Himself]. And by "some godlike thing" I mean no more the generable [i.e., that which is generated] but the ingenerable.

5. If, then, space be some godlike thing, it is substantial; but if 'tis God [Himself], it transcends substance. But it is to be thought of otherwise [than God], and in this way.

God is first "thinkable" <or "intelligible"> for us, not for Himself, for that the thing that's thought doth fall beneath the thinker's sense. God then cannot be "thinkable" unto Himself, in that He's thought of by Himself as being nothing else but what He thinks. But he is "something else" for us, and so He's thought of by us.

6. If space is, therefore, to be thought, [it should] not, [then, be thought as] God, but space. If God is also to be thought, [He should] not [be conceived] as space, but as energy that can contain [all space].

Further, all that is moved is moved not in the moved but in the stable. And that which moves [another] is of course stationary, for 'tis impossible that it should move with it.

A: How is it, then, that things down here, Thrice-greatest one, are moved with those that are [already] moved? For thou hast said the errant spheres were moved by the inerrant one.

H: This is not, O Asclepius, a moving with, but one against; they are not moved with one another, but one against the other. It is this contrariety which turneth the resistance of their motion into rest. For that resistance is the rest of motion.

7. Hence, too, the errant spheres, being moved contrarily to the inerrant one, are moved by one another by mutual contrariety, [and also] by the spable one through contrariety itself. And this can otherwise not be.

The Bears up there <i.e., Ursa Major and Minor>, which neither set nor rise, think'st thou they rest or move?

A: They move, Thrice-greatest one.

H: And what their motion, my Asclepius?

A: Motion that turns for ever round the same.

H: But revolution - motion around same - is fixed by rest. For "round-the-same" doth stop "beyond-same". "Beyond-same" then, being stopped, if it be steadied in "round-same" - the contrary stands firm, being rendered ever stable by its contrariety.

8. Of this I'll give thee here on earth an instance, which the eye can see. Regard the animals down here - a man, for instance, swimming! The water moves, yet the resistance of his hands and feet give him stability, so that he is not borne along with it, nor sunk thereby.

A: Thou hast, Thrice-greatest one, adduced a most clear instance.

H: All motion, then, is caused in station and by station.

The motion, therefore, of the cosmos (and of every other hylic <i.e., material> animal) will not be caused by things exterior to the cosmos, but by things interior [outward] to the exterior - such [things] as soul, or spirit, or some such other thing incorporeal.

'Tis not the body that doth move the living thing in it; nay, not even the whole [body of the universe a lesser] body e'en though there be no life in it.

9. A: What meanest thou by this, Thrice-greatest one? Is it not bodies, then, that move the stock and stone and all the other things inanimate?

H: By no means, O Asclepius. The something-in-the-body, the that-which-moves the thing inanimate, this surely's not a body, for that it moves the two of them - both body of the lifter and the lifted? So that a thing that's lifeless will not move a lifeless thing. That which doth move [another thing] is animate, in that it is the mover.

Thou seest, then, how heavy laden is the soul, for it alone doth lift two bodies. That things, moreover, moved are moved in something as well as moved by something is clear.

10. A: Yea, O Thrice-greatest one, things moved must needs be moved in something void.

H: Thou sayest well, O [my] Asclepius! For naught of things that are is void. Alone the "is-not" is void [and] stranger to subsistence. For that which is subsistent can never change to void.

A: Are there, then, O Thrice-greatest one, no such things as an empty cask, for instance, and an empty jar, a cup and vat, and other things like unto them?

H: Alack, Asclepius, for thy far-wandering from the truth! Think'st thou that things most full and most replete are void?

11. A: How meanest thou, Thrice-greatest one?

H: Is not air body?

A: It is.

H: And doth this body not pervade all things, and so, pervading, fill them? And "body"; doth body not consist from blending of the "four" <elements>? Full, then, of air are all thou callest void; and if of air, then of the "four".

Further, of this the converse follows, that all thou callest full are void - of air; for that they have their space filled out with other bodies, and, therefore, are not able to receive the air therein. These, then, which thou dost say are void, they should be hollow named, not void; for they not only are, but they are full of air and spirit.

12. A: Thy argument (logos), Thrice-greatest one, is not to be gainsaid; air is a body. Further, it is this body which doth pervade all things, and so, pervading, fill them. What are we, then, to call that space in which the all doth move?

H: The bodiless, Asclepius.

A: What, then, is Bodiless?

H: 'Tis Mind and Reason (logos), whole out of whole, all self-embracing, free from all body, from all error free, unsensible to body and untouchable, self stayed in self, containing all, preserving those that are, whose rays, to use a likeness, are Good, Truth, Light beyond light, the Archetype of soul.

A: What, then, is God?

13. H: Not any one of these is He; for He it is that causeth them to be, both all and each and every thing of all that are. Nor hath He left a thing beside that is-not; but they are all from things-that-are and not from things-that-are-not. For that the things-that-are-not have naturally no power of being anything, but naturally have the power of the inability-to-be. And, conversely, the things-that-are have not the nature of some time not-being.

14. A: What say'st thou ever, then, God is?

H: God, therefore, is not Mind, but Cause that the Mind is; God is not Spirit, but Cause that Spirit is; God is not Light, but Cause that the Light is. Hence one should honor God with these two names [the Good and Father] - names which pertain to Him alone and no one else.

For no one of the other so-called gods, no one of men, or daimones, can be in any measure Good, but God alone; and He is Good alone and nothing else. The rest of things are separable all from the Good's nature; for [all the rest] are soul and body, which have no place that can contain the Good.

15. For that as mighty is the Greatness of the Good as is the Being of all things that are - both bodies and things bodiless, things sensible and intelligible things. Call thou not, therefore, aught else Good, for thou

would'st imious be; nor anything at all at any time call God but Good alone, for so thou would'st again be impious.

16. Though, then, the Good is spoken of by all, it is not understood by all, what thing it is. Not only, then, is God not understood by all, but both unto the gods and some of the men they out of ignorance do give the name of Good, though they can never either be or become Good. For they are very different from God, while Good can never be distinguished from Him, for that God is the same as Good.

The rest of the immortal ones are nonetheless honored with the name of God, and spoken of as gods; but God is Good not out of courtesy but out of nature. For that God's nature and the Good is one; one os the kind of both, from which all other kinds [proceed].

The Good is he who gives all things and naught receives. God, then, doth give all things and receive naught. God, then, is Good, and Good is God.

17. The other name of God is Father, again because He is the that-which-maketh-all. The part of father is to make.

Wherefore child-making is a very great and a most pious thing in life for them who think aright, and to leave life on earth without a child a very great misfortune and impiety; and he who hath no child is punished by the daimones after death.

And this is the punishment: that that man's soul who hath no child, shall be condemned unto a body with neither man's nor woman's nature, a thing accursed beneath the sun.

Wherefore, Asclepius, let not your sympathies be with the man who hath no child, but rather pity his mishap, knowing what punishment abides for him.

Let all that has been said then, be to thee, Asclepius, an introduction to the gnosis of the nature of all things.

### **III. The Sacred Sermon**

This brief and apparently somewhat garbled text recounts the creation and nature of the world in terms much like those of the *Poemandres*. The major theme is the renewal of all things in a cyclic universe, with the seven planetary rulers again playing a major role.

1. The Glory of all things is God, Godhead and Godly Nature. Source of the things that are is God, who is both Mind and Nature - yea Matter, the Wisdom that reveals all things. Source [too] is Godhead - yea Nature, Energy, Necessity, and End, and Making-new-again.

Darkness that knew no bounds was in Abyss, and Water [too] and subtle Breath intelligent; these were by Power of God in Chaos.

Then Holy Light arose; and there collected 'neath Dry Space <literally: "sand"> from out Moist Essence Elements; and all the Gods do separate things out from fecund Nature.

2. All things being undefined and yet unwrought, the light things were assigned unto the height, the heavy ones had their foundations laid down underneath the moist part of Dry Space, the universal things being bounded off by Fire and hanged in Breath to keep them up.

And Heaven was seen in seven circles; its Gods were visible in forms of stars with all their signs; while Nature had her members made articulate together with the Gods in her. And [Heaven's] periphery revolved in cyclic course, borne on by Breath of God.

3. And every God by his own proper power brought forth what was appointed him. Thus there arose four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and those that in the water dwell, and things with wings, and everything that beareth seed, and grass, and shoot of every flower, all having in themselves seed of again-becoming.

And they selected out the births of men for gnosis of the works of God and attestation of the energy of Nature; the multitude of men for lordship over all beneath the heaven and gnosis of its blessings, that they might increase in increasing and multiply in multitude, and every soul infleshed by revolution of the Cyclic Gods, for observation of the marvels of Heaven and Heaven's Gods' revolution, and of the works of God and energy of Nature, for tokens of its blessings, for gnosis of the power of God, that they might know the fates that follow good and evil [deeds] and learn the cunning work of all good arts.



4. [Thus] there begins their living and their growing wise, according to the fate appointed by the revolution of the Cyclic Gods, and their deceasing for this end.

And there shall be memorials mighty of their handiworks upon the earth, leaving dim trace behind when cycles are renewed.

For every birth of flesh ensouled, and of the fruit of seed, and every handiwork, though it decay, shall of necessity renew itself, both by the renovation of the Gods and by the turning-round of Nature's rhythmic wheel.

For that whereas the Godhead is Nature's ever-making-new-again the cosmic mixture, Nature herself is also co-established in that Godhead.

#### **IV. The Cup or Monad**

This short text gives an unusually lucid overview of the foundations of Hermetic thought. The stress on rejection of the body and its pleasures, and on the division of humanity into those with Mind and those without, are reminiscent of some of the so-called "Gnostic" writings of the same period. The idea that the division is a matter of choice, on the other hand, is a pleasant variation on the almost Calvinist flavor of writings such as the *Apocalypse of Adam*.

Mead speculates that the imagery of the Cup in this text may have a distant connection, by way of unorthodox ideas about Communion, with the legends of the Holy Grail.

1. Hermes: With Reason (Logos), not with hands, did the World-maker make the universal World; so that thou shouldst think of him as everywhere and ever-being, the Author of all things, and One and Only, who by His Will all beings hath created.

This Body of Him is a thing no man can touch, or see, or measure, a body inextensible, like to no other frame. 'Tis neither Fire nor Water, Air nor Breath; yet all of them come from it. Now being Good he willed to consecrate this [Body] to Himself alone, and set its Earth in order and adorn it.

2. So down [to Earth] He sent the Cosmos of this Frame Divine - man, a life that cannot die, and yet a life that dies. And o'er [all other] lives and over Cosmos [too], did man excel by reason of the Reason (Logos) and the Mind. For contemplator of God's works did man become; he marvelled and did strive to know their Author.

3. Reason (Logos) indeed, O Tat, among all men hath He distributed, but Mind not yet; not that He grudgeth any, for grudging cometh not from Him, but hath its place below, within the souls of men who have no Mind.

Tat: Why then did God, O father, not on all bestow a share of Mind?

H: He willed, my son, to have it set up in the midst for souls, just as it were a prize.

4. T: And where hath He set it up?

H: He filled a mighty Cup with it, and sent it down, joining a Herald [to it], to whom He gave command to make this proclamation to the hearts of men:

Baptize thyself with this Cup's baptism, what heart can do so, thou that hast faith thou canst ascend to him that hath sent down the Cup, thou that dost know for what thoudidst come into being!

As many then as understood the Herald's tidings and doused themselves in Mind, became partakers in the Gnosis; and when they had "received the Mind" they were made "perfect men".

But they who do not understand the tidings, these, since they possess the aid of Reason [only] and not Mind, are ignorant wherefor they have come into being and whereby.

5. The senses of such men are like irrational creatures'; and as their [whole] make-up is in their feelings and their impulses, they fail in all appreciation of <lit.: "they do not wonder at"> those things which really are worth contemplation. These center all their thought upon the pleasures of the body and its appetites, in the belief that for its sake man hath come into being.

But they who have received some portion of God's gift, these, Tat, if we judge by their deeds, have from Death's bonds won their release; for they embrace in their own Mind all things, things on the earth, things in the heaven, and things above the heaven - if there be aught. And having raised themselves so far they sight the Good; and having sighted it, they look upon their sojourn here as a mischance; and in disdain of all, both things in body and the bodiless, they speed their way unto that One and Only One.

6. This is, O Tat, the Gnosis of the Mind, Vision of things Divine; God-knowledge is it, for the Cup is God's.

T: Father, I, too, would be baptized.

H: Unless thou first shall hate thy Body, son, thou canst not love thy Self. But if thou lov'st thy Self thou shalt have Mind, and having Mind thou shalt share in the Gnosis.

T: Father, what dost thou mean?

H: It is not possible, my son, to give thyself to both - I mean to things that perish and to things divine. For seeing that existing things are twain, Body and Bodiless, in which the perishing and the divine are understood, the man who hath the will to choose is left the choice of one or the other; for it can never be the twain should meet. And in those souls to whom the choice is left, the waning of the one causes the other's growth to show itself.

7. Now the choosing of the Better not only proves a lot most fair for him who makes the choice, seeing it makes the man a God, but also shows his piety to God. Whereas the [choosing] of the Worse, although it doth destroy the "man", it doth only disturb God's harmony to this extent, that as processions pass by in the middle of the way, without being able to do anything but take the road from others, so do such men move in procession through the world led by their bodies' pleasures.

8. This being so, O Tat, what comes from God hath been and will be ours; but that which is dependent on ourselves, let this press onward and have no delay, for 'tis not God, 'tis we who are the cause of evil things, preferring them to good.

Thou see'st, son, how many are the bodies through which we have to pass, how many are the choirs of daimones, how vast the system of the star-courses [through which our Path doth lie], to hasten to the One and Only God.

For to the Good there is no other shore; It hath no bounds; It is without an end; and for Itself It is without beginning, too, though unto us it seemeth to have one - the Gnosis.

9. Therefore to It Gnosis is no beginning; rather is it [that Gnosis doth afford] to us the first beginning of its being known.

Let us lay hold, therefore, of the beginning. and quickly speed through all [we have to pass].

`Tis very hard, to leave the things we have grown used to, which meet our gaze on every side, and turn ourselves back to the Old Old [Path].

Appearances delight us, whereas things which appear not make their believing hard.

Now evils are the more apparent things, whereas the Good can never show Itself unto the eyes, for It hath neither form nor figure.

Therefore the Good is like Itself alone, and unlike all things else; or `tis impossible that That which hath no body should make Itself apparent to a body.

10. The "Like's" superiority to the "Unlike" and the "Unlike's" inferiority unto the "Like" consists in this:

The Oneness being Source and Root of all, is in all things as Root and Source. Without [this] Source is naught; whereas the Source [Itself] is from naught but itself, since it is Source of all the rest. It is Itself Its Source, since It may have no other Source.

The Oneness then being Source, containeth every number, but is contained by none; engendereth every number, but is engendered by no other one.

11. Now all that is engendered is imperfect, it is divisible, to increase subject and to decrease; but with the Perfect [One] none of these things doth hold. Now that which is increasable increases from the Oneness, but succumbs through its own feebleness when it no longer can contain the One.

And now, O Tat, God's Image hath been sketched for thee, as far as it can be; and if thou wilt attentively dwell on it and observe it with thine heart's eyes, believe me, son, thou'lt find the Path that leads above; nay, that Image shall become thy Guide itself, because the Sight [Divine] hath this peculiar [charm], it holdeth fast and draweth unto it those who succeed in opening their eyes, just as, they say, the magnet [draweth] iron.

## **V. Though Unmanifest God Is Most Manifest**

This sermon is a fairly straightforward Hermetic version of the "argument by design", a standard approach since ancient times to a proof of the existence of God. Typically, for a Hermetic tractate, its choice of evidence includes a paean on the beauty and perfection of the human form.

1. I will recount to thee this sermon (logos) too, O Tat, that thou may'st cease to be without the mysteries of the God beyond all name. And mark thou well how that which to the many seems unmanifest, will grow most manifest for thee.

Now were it manifest, it would not be. For all that is made manifest is subject to becoming, for it hath been made manifest. But the Unmanifest for ever is, for It doth not desire to be made manifest. It ever is, and maketh manifest all other things.

Being Himself unmanifest, as ever being and ever making-manifest, Himself is not made manifest. God is not made Himself; by thinking-manifest <i.e., thinking into manifestation>, He thinketh all things manifest.

Now "thinking-manifest" deals with things made alone, for thinking-manifest is nothing else than making.

2. He, then, alone who is not made, 'tis clear, is both beyond all power of thinking-manifest, and is unmanifest.

And as He thinketh all things manifest, He manifests through all things and in all, and most of all in whatsoever things He wills to manifest.

Do thou, then, Tat, my son, pray first unto our Lord and Father, the One-and-Only One, from whom the One doth come, to show His mercy unto thee, in order that thou mayest have the power to catch a thought of this so mighty God, one single beam of Him to shine into thy thinking. For thought alone "sees" the Unmanifest, in that it is itself unmanifest.

If, then, thou hast the power, He will, Tat, manifest to thy mind's eyes. The Lord begrudgeth not Himself to anything, but manifests Himself through the whole world.

Thou hast the power of taking thought, of seeing it and grasping it in thy own "hands", and gazing face to face upon God's Image. But if what is within thee even is unmanifest to thee, how, then, shall He Himself who is within thy self be manifest for thee by means of [outer] eyes?

3. But if thou wouldst "see" him, bethink thee of the sun, bethink thee of moon's course, bethink thee of the order of the stars. Who is the One who watcheth o'er that order? For every order hath its boundaries marked out by place and number.

The sun's the greatest god of gods in heaven; to whom all of the heavenly gods give place as unto king and master. And he, this so-great one, he greater than the earth and sea, endures to have above him circling smaller stars than him. Out of respect to Whom, or out of fear of Whom, my son, [doth he do this]?

Nor like nor equal is the course each of these stars describes in heaven. Who [then] is He who marketh out the manner of their course and its extent?

4. The Bear up there that turneth round itself, and carries round the whole cosmos with it - Who is the owner of this instrument? Who He who hath set round the sea its bounds? Who He who hath set on its seat the earth?

For, Tat, there is someone who is the Maker and the Lord of all these things. It could not be that number, place and measure could be kept without someone to make them. No order whatsoever could be made by that which lacketh place and lacketh measure; nay, even this is not without a lord, my son. For if the orderless lacks something, in that it is not lord of order's path, it also is beneath a lord - the one who hath not yet ordained it order.

5. Would that it were possible for thee to get thee wings, and soar into the air, and, poised midway 'tween earth and heaven, behold the earth's solidity, the sea's fluidity (the flowings of its streams), the spaciousness of air, fire's swiftness, [and] the coursing of the stars, the swiftness of heaven's circuit round them [all]!

Most blessed sight were it, my son, to see all these beneath one sway - the motionless in motion, and the unmanifest made manifest; whereby is made this order of the cosmos and the cosmos which we see of order.

6. If thou would'st see Him too through things that suffer death, both on the earth and in the deep, think of a man's being fashioned in the womb, my son, and strictly scrutinize the art of Him who fashions him, and learn who fashioneth this fair and godly image of the Man.

Who [then] is He who traceth out the circles of the eyes; who He who boreth out the nostrils and the ears; who He who openeth [the portal of] the mouth; who He who doth stretch out and tie the nerves; who He who channels out the veins; who He who hardeneth the bones; who He who covereth the flesh with skin; who He who separates the fingers and the joints; who He who widens out a treading for the feet; who He who diggeth out the ducts; who He who spreadeth out the spleen; who he who shapeth heart like to a pyramid; who He who setteth ribs together; who He who wideneth the liver out; who He who maketh lungs like to a sponge; who He who maketh belly stretch so much; who he who doth make prominent the parts most honorable, so that they may be seen, while hiding out of sight those of least honor?

7. Behold how many arts [employed] on one material, how many labors on one single sketch; and all exceeding fair, and all in perfect measure, yet all diversified! Who made them all? What mother, or what sire, save God alone, unmanifest, who hath made all things by His Will?

8. And no one saith a statue or a picture comes to be without a sculptor or [without] a painter; doth [then] such workmanship as this exist without a Worker? What depth of blindness, what deep impiety, what depth of ignorance! See, [then] thou ne'er, son Tat, deprivest works of Worker!

Nay, rather is He greater than all names, so great is He, the Father of them all. For verily He is the Only One, and this is His work, to be a father.

9. So, if thou forcest me somewhat too bold, to speak, His being is conceiving of all things and making [them].

And as without its maker its is impossible that anything should be, so ever is He not unless He ever makes all things, in heaven, in air, in earth, in deep, in all of cosmos, in every part that is and that is not of everything. For there is naught in all the world that is not He.

He is Himself, both things that are and things that are not. The things that are He hath made manifest, He keepeth things that are not in Himself.

10. He is the God beyond all name; He the unmanifest, He the most manifest; He whom the mind [alone] can contemplate, He visible to the eyes [as well]; He is the one of no body, the one of many bodies, nay, rather He of every body.

Naught is there which he is not. For all are He and He is all. And for this cause hath He all names, in that they are one Father's. And for this cause hath He Himself no nome, in that He's Father of [them] all.

Who, then, may sing Thee praise of Thee, or [praise] to Thee?

Whither, again, am I to turn my eyes to sing Thy praise; above, below, within, without?

There is no way, no place [is there] about Thee, nor any other thing of things that are.

All [are] in Thee; all [are] from Thee, O Thou who givest all and takest naught, for Thou hast all and naught is there Thou hast not.



11. And when, O Father, shall I hymn Thee? For none can seize Thy hour or time.

For what, again, shall I sing hymn? For things that Thou hast made, or things Thou hast not? For things Thou hast made manifest, or things Thou hast concealed?

How, further, shall I hymn Thee? As being of myself? As having something of mine own? As being other?

For that Thou art whatever I may be; Thou art whatever I may do; Thou art whatever I may speak.

For Thou art all, and there is nothing else which Thou art not. Thou art all that which doth exist, and Thou art what doth not exist - Mind when Thou thinkest, and Father when Thou makest, and God when Thou dost energize, and Good and Maker of all things.

For that the subtler part of matter is the air, of air the soul, of soul the mind, and of mind God.

## **VI. In God Alone Is Good And Elsewhere Nowhere**

This sermon on the nature of the Good, like *To Asclepius* (CH II), relies heavily on the technical language of classical Greek philosophy - a point which some of Mead's translations tend to obscure. "The Good," in Greek thought, is also the self-caused and self-sufficient, and thus has little in common with later conceptions of "goodness," just as the Latin word *virtus* and the modern Christian concept of "virtue" are very nearly opposites despite their etymological connection. The word "passion" here also needs to be understood in its older sense, as the opposite of "action" (cf. "active" and "passive").

<The negative attitude toward humanity and the cosmos which appears in this text contrasts sharply with the more positive assessment found, for example, in the *Poemandres* (CH I) or in the *Asclepius* - a reminder that these documents are relics of a diverse and not necessarily consistent school of thought. 1. Good, O Asclepius, is in none else save in God alone; nay, rather, Good is God Himself eternally.

If it be so, [Good] must be essence, from every kind of motion and becoming free (though naught is free from It), possessed of stable energy around Itself, never too little, nor too much, an ever-full supply. [Though] one, yet [is It] source of all; for what supplieth all is Good. When I, moreover, say [supplieth] altogether [all], it is for ever Good. But this belongs to no one else save God alone.

For He stands not in need of any thing, so that desiring it He should be bad; nor can a single thing of things that are be lost to him, on losing which He should be pained; for pain is part of bad.

Nor is there aught superior to Him, that He should be subdued by it; nor any peer to Him to do Him wrong, or [so that] He should fall in love on its account; nor aught that gives no ear to Him, whereat He should grow angry; nor wiser aught, for Him to envy.

2. Now as all these are non-existent in His being, what is there left but Good alone?

For just as naught of bad is to be found in such transcendent Being, so too in no one of the rest will Good be found.

For in them are all of the other things <i.e., those things which are not Good> - both in the little and the great, both in each severally and in this living one that's greater than them all and the mightiest [of them] <i.e., the cosmos>.

For things subject to birth abound in passions, birth in itself being passible. But where there's passion, nowhere is there Good; and where is Good, nowhere a single passion. For where is day, nowhere is night; and where is night, day is nowhere.

Wherefore in genesis the Good can never be, but only be in the ingenerate.

But seeing that the sharing in all things hath been bestowed on matter, so doth it share in Good.

In this way is the Cosmos Good; that, in so far as it doth make all things, as far as making goes it's Good, but in all other things it is not Good. For it's both passible and subject unto motion, and maker of things passible.

3. Whereas in man by greater or less of bad is good determined. For what is not too bad down here, is good, and good down here is the least part of bad.

It cannot, therefore, be that good down here should be quite clean of bad, for down here good is fouled with bad; and being fouled, it stays no longer good, and staying not it changes into bad.

In God alone, is, therefore, Good, or rather Good is God Himself.

So then, Asclepius, the name alone of Good is found in men, the thing itself nowhere [in them], for this can never be.

For no material body doth contain It - a thing bound on all sides by bad, by labors, pains, desires and passions, by error and by foolish thoughts.

And greatest ill of all, Asclepius, is that each of these things that have been said above, is thought down here to be the greatest good.

And what is still an even greater ill, is belly-lust, the error that doth lead the band of all the other ills - the thing that makes us turn down here from Good.

4. And I, for my part, give thanks to God, that He hath cast it in my mind about the Gnosis of the Good, that it can never be It should be in the world. For that the world is "fullness" of the bad, but God of Good, and Good of God.

The excellencies of the Beautiful are round the very essence [of the Good]; nay, they do seem too pure, too unalloyed; perchance 'tis they that are themselves Its essences.

For one may dare to say, Asclepius - if essence, sooth, He have - God's essence is the Beautiful; the Beautiful is further also Good.

There is no Good that can be got from objects in the world. For all the things that fall beneath the eye are image-things and pictures as it were; while those that do not meet [the eye are the realities], especially the [essence] of the Beautiful and Good.

Just as the eye cannot see God, so can it not behold the Beautiful and Good. For that they are integral parts of God, wedded to Him alone, inseparate familiars, most beloved, with whom God is Himself in love, or they with God.

5. If thou canst God conceive, thou shalt conceive the Beautiful and Good, transcending Light, made lighter than the Light by God. That Beauty is beyond compare, inimitate that Good, e'en as God is Himself.

As, then, thou dost conceive of God, conceive the Beautiful and Good. For they cannot be joined with aught of other things that live, since they can never be divorced from God.

Seek'st thou for God, thou seekest for the Beautiful. One is the Path that leadeth unto It - Devotion joined with Gnosis.

6. And thus it is that they who do not know and do not tread Devotion's Path, do dare to call man beautiful and good, though he have ne'er e'en in his visions seen a whit that's Good, but is enveloped with every kind of bad, and thinks the bad is good, and thus doth make unceasing use of it, and even feareth that it should be ta'en from him, so straining every nerve not only to preserve but even to increase it.

Such are the things that men call good and beautiful, Asclepius - things which we cannot flee or hate; for hardest thing of all is that we've need of them and cannot live without them.

## **VII. The Greatest Ill Among Men is Ignorance of God**

A good solid diatribe in colorful language. One easily imagines it being delivered at the Hermetic equivalent of a tent revival meeting.

1. Whither stumble ye, sots, who have sopped up the wine of ignorance and can so far not carry it that ye already even spew it forth?

Stay ye, be sober, gaze upwards with the [true] eyes of the heart! And if ye cannot all, yet ye at least who can!

For that the ill of ignorance doth pour o'er all the earth and overwhelm the soul that's battered down within the body, preventing it from fetching port within Salvation's harbors.

2. Be ye then not carried off by the fierce flood, but using the shore-current <lit., "back-current" or "up-current">, ye who can, make for Salvation's port, and, harboring there, seek ye for one to take you by the hand and lead you unto Gnosis' gates.

Where shines clear Light, of every darkness clean; where not a single soul is drunk, but sober all they gaze with their hearts' eyes on Him who willeth to be seen.

No ear can hear Him, nor can eye see Him, nor tongue speak of Him, but [only] mind and heart.

But first thou must tear off from thee the cloak which thou dost wear - the web of ignorance, the ground of bad, corruption's chain, the carapace of darkness, the living death, sensation's corpse, the tomb thou carriest with thee, the robber in thy house, who through the things he loveth, hateth thee, and through the things he hateth, bears thee malice.

3. Such is the hateful cloak thou wearest - that throttles thee [and holds thee] down to it, in order that thou may'st not gaze above, and having seen the Beauty of the Truth, and Good that dwells therein, detest the bad of it; having found out the plot that it hath schemed against thee, by making void of sense those seeming things which men think senses.

For that it hath with mass of matter blocked them up and crammed them full of loathsome lust, so that thou may'st not hear about the things that thou should'st hear, nor see the things thou should'st see.

### **VIII. That No One of Existing Things doth Perish, but Men in Error Speak of Their Changes as Destructions and as Deaths**

The idea of cyclic change central to CH III, "The Sacred Sermon", also takes center stage here. A current of ancient speculation grounded in astrology held that as the planets returned after vast cycles of time to the same positions, so all events on earth would repeat themselves precisely into eternity in the future - and had done so from eternity in the past. The technical term for this recurrence, *apocatastasis*, is the word Mead translates as "restoration" in the beginning of section 4.

Mead footnotes this tractate as "obscure" and "faulty" in places, and his translation of the beginning of section 3 is conjectural.

1. [Hermes:] Concerning Soul and Body, son, we now must speak; in what way Soul is deathless, and whence comes the activity in composing and dissolving Body.

For there's no death for aught of things [that are]; the thought this word conveys, is either void of fact, or [simply] by the knocking off a syllable what is called "death", doth stand for "deathless".

For death is of destruction, and nothing in the Cosmos is destroyed. For if Cosmos is second God, a life <or living creature> that cannot die, it cannot be that any part of this immortal life should die. All things in Cosmos are parts of Cosmos, and most of all is man, the rational animal.

2. For truly first of all, eternal and transcending birth, is God the universals' Maker. Second is he "after His image", Cosmos, brought into being by Him, sustained and fed by Him, made deathless, as by his own Sire, living for aye, as ever free from death.

Now that which ever-liveth, differs from the Eternal; for He hath not been brought to being by another, and even if He have been brought to being, He hath not been brought to being by Himself, but ever is brought into being.

For the Eternal, in that It is eternal, is the all. The Father is Himself eternal of Himself, but Cosmos hath become eternal and immortal by the Father.

3. And of the matter stored beneath it <i.e., beneath the cosmos>, the Father made of it a universal body, and packing it together made it spherical - wrapping it round the life - [a sphere] which is immortal in itself, and that doth make materiality eternal.

But He, the Father, full-filled with His ideas, did sow the lives <or living creatures> into the sphere, and shut them in as in a cave, willing to order forth the life with every kind of living.

So He with deathlessness enclosed the universal body, that matter might not wish to separate itself from body's composition, and so dissolve into its own [original] unordered.

For matter, son, when it was yet incorporate <i.e., not yet formed into bodies>, was in unorder. And it doth still retain down here this [nature of unorder] enveloping the rest of the small lives <or living creatures> - that increase-and-decrease which men call death.

4. It is round earthly lives that this unorder doth exist. For that the bodies of the heavenly ones preserve one order allotted to them by the Father as their rule; and it is by the restoration of each one [of them] this order is preserved indissolute.

The "restoration" of bodies on the earth is thus their composition, whereas their dissolution restores them to those bodies which can never be dissolved, that is to say, which know no death. Privation, thus, of sense is brought about, not loss of bodies.

5. Now the third life - Man, after the image of the Cosmos made, [and] having mind, after the Father's will, beyond all earthly lives - not only doth have feeling with the second God <i.e., the Cosmos>, but also hath conception of the first; for of the one 'tis sensible as of a body, while of the other it conceives as bodiless and the Good Mind.

Tat: Doth then this life not perish?

Hermes: Hush, son! and understand what God, what Cosmos [is], what is a life that cannot die, and what a life subject to dissolution.

Yea, understand the Cosmos is by God and in God; but Man by Cosmos and in Cosmos.

The source and limit and the constitution of all things is God.

## **IX. On Thought and Sense**

This somewhat diffuse essay covers a series of topics, starting with (and to some extent from) the concept that the set of perceptions we call "thoughts" and the set we call "sensory perceptions" are not significantly different from each other. The implications of this idea play a significant role in later Hermetic thought, particularly in the areas of magic and the Art of Memory; in this tractate, though, the issues involved are barely touched, and the argument wanders into moral dualisms and the

equally important, but distinct, idea that the Cosmos is itself a divine creative power.

Section 10, in which understanding is held up as the source and precondition of belief, should probably be seen as part of the same ancient debate on the roles of faith and reason that gave rise to Tertullian's famous *credo quia absurdum* ("I believe because it is absurd").

1. I gave the Perfect Sermon (Logos) yesterday, Asclepius; today I think it right, as sequel thereunto, to go through point by point the Sermon about Sense.

Now sense and thought do seem to differ, in that the former has to do with matter, the latter has to do with substance. But unto me both seem to be at-one and not to differ - in men I mean. In other lives <or living creatures> sense is at-oned with Nature, but in men thought.

Now mind doth differ just as much from thought as God doth from divinity. For that divinity by God doth come to be, and by mind thought, the sister of the word (logos) and instruments of one another. For neither doth the word (logos) find utterance without thought, nor is thought manifested without word.

2. So sense and thought both flow together into man, as though they were entwined with one another. For neither without sensing can one think, nor without thinking sense.

But it is possible [they say] to think a thing apart from sense, as those who fancy sights in dreams. But unto me it seems that both of these activities occur in dream-sight, and sense doth pass out of the sleeping to the waking state.

For man is separated into soul and body, and only when the two sides of his sense agree together, does utterance of its thought conceived by mind take place.

3. For it is mind that doth conceive all thoughts - good thoughts when it receives the seeds from God, their contraries when [it receiveth them] from the daimonials; no part of Cosmos being free of daimon, who stealthily doth creep into the daimon who's illumined by God's light <i.e., the human soul>, and sow in him the seed of its own energy.



And mind conceives the seed thus sown, adultery, murder, parricide, [and] sacrilege, impiety, [and] strangling, casting down precipices, and all such other deeds as are the work of evil daimons.

4. The seeds of God, 'tis true, are few, but vast and fair, and good - virtue and self-control, devotion. Devotion is God-gnosis; and he who knoweth God, being filled with all good things, thinks godly thoughts and not thoughts like the many [think].

For this cause they who Gnostic are, please not the many, nor the many them. They are thought mad and laughed at; they're hated and despised, and sometimes even put to death.

For we did say that bad must needs dwell on earth, where 'tis in its own place. Its place is earth, and not Cosmos, as some will sometimes say with impious tongue.

But he who is a devotee of God, will bear with all - once he has sensed the Gnosis. For such an one all things, e'en though they be for others bad, are for him good; deliberately he doth refer them all unto the Gnosis. And, thing most marvelous, 'tis he alone who maketh bad things good.

5. But I return once more to the Discourse (Logos) on Sense. That sense doth share with thought in man, doth constitute him man. But 'tis not [every] man, as I have said, who benefits by thought; for this man is material, that other one substantial.

For the material man, as I have said, [consorting] with the bad, doth have his seed of thought from daimons; while the substantial men [consorting] with the Good, are saved by God.

Now God is Maker of all things, and in His making, He maketh all [at last] like to Himself; but they, while they're becoming good by exercise of their activity, are unproductive things.

It is the working of the Cosmic Course that maketh their becomings what they are, befouling some of them with bad and others of them making clean with good.

For Cosmos, too, Asclepius, possesseth sense-and-thought peculiar to itself, not like that of man; 'tis not so manifold, but as it were a better and a simpler one.

6. The single sense-and-thought of Cosmos is to make all things, and make them back into itself again, as Organ of the Will of God, so organized that it, receiving all the seeds into itself from God, and keeping them within itself, may make all manifest, and [then] dissolving them, make them all new again; and thus, like a Good Gardener of Life, things that have been dissolved, it taketh to itself, and giveth them renewal once again.

There is no thing to which it gives not life; but taking all unto itself it makes them live, and is at the same time the Place of Life and its Creator.

7. Now bodies matter [-made] are in diversity. Some are of earth, of water some, some are of air, and some of fire.

But they are all composed; some are more [composite], and some are simpler. The heavier ones are more [composed], the lighter less so.

It is the speed of Cosmos' Course that works the manifoldness of the kinds of births. For being a most swift Breath, it doth bestow their qualities on bodies together with the One Pleroma - that of Life.

8. God, then, is Sire of Cosmos; Cosmos, of all in Cosmos. And Cosmos is God's Son; but things in Cosmos are by Cosmos.

And properly hath it been called Cosmos [Order]; for that it orders all with their diversity of birth, with its not leaving aught without its life, with the unweariedness of its activity, the speed of its necessity, the composition of its elements, and order of its creatures.

The same, then, of necessity and propriety should have the name of Order.

The sense-and-thought, then, of all lives doth come into them from without, inbreathed by what contains [them all]; whereas Cosmos receives them once for all together with its coming into being, and keeps them as a gift from God.

9. But God is not, as some suppose, beyond the reach of sense-and-thought. It is through superstition men thus impiously speak.

For all the things that are, Asclepius, all are in God, are brought by God to be, and do depend on Him - both things that act through bodies, and things that through soul-substance make [other things] to move, and things that make things live by means of spirit, and things that take unto themselves the things that are worn out.

And rightly so; nay, I would rather say, He doth not have these things; but I speak forth the truth, He is them all Himself. He doth not get them from without, but gives them out [from Him].

This is God's sense-and-thought, ever to move all things. And never time shall be when e'en a whit of things that are shall cease; and when I say "a whit of things that are", I mean a whit of God. For thigs that are, God hath; nor aught [is there] without Him, nor [is] He without aught.

10. These things should seem to thee, Asclepius, if thou dost understand them, true; but if thou dost not understand, things not to be believed.

To understand is to believe, to not believe is not to understand.

My word (logos) doth go before [thee] to the truth. But mighty is the mind, and when it hath been led by word up to a certain point, it hath the power to come before [thee] to the truth.

And having thought o'er all these things, and found them consonant with those which have already been translated by the reason, it hath [e'en now] believed, and found its rest in that Fair Faith.

To those, then, who by God[']s good aid] do understand the things that have been said [by us] above, they're credible; but unto those who understand them not, incredible.

Let so much, then, suffice on thought-and-sense.

## **X. The Key**

This longer tractate presents itself explicitly as a summary or abridgement of the General Sermons (CH II-IX), and discusses the

Hermetic view of knowledge and its role in the lives and afterlives of human beings. The attentive reader will notice certain contradictions between the afterlife-teachings of this and previous tractates.

One of the central concepts of *The Key*, and of Hermetic thought generally, is the distinction between ordinary discursive knowledge which can be expressed in words (in Greek, *episteme*, which Mead translates somewhat clumsily as "science") and transcendent, unitive knowledge which cannot be communicated (in Greek, *gnosis*, which Mead simply and sensibly leaves untranslated). The same distinction can be found in many systems of mystical thought. Unlike most of these, though, the Hermetic teachings place value on both.

Readers without much experience in the jargon of Classical philosophy will want to remember that "hylic" means "material", "passible" means "subject to outside forces or to suffering", and "intelligible" means "belonging to the realm of the Mind", and "motion" includes all kinds of change. The special implications of "good" in Greek thought - of self-sufficiency and desirability - should also be kept in mind.

The delightful irony of the Zen moment early in section 9, when Hermes - in the middle of this very substantial lecture - defines the good and pious man as "he who doth not say much or lend his ear to much" and thus rules out both himself and his audience, seems to have been lost on subsequent commentators.

1. Hermes: My yesterday's discourse (logos) I did devote to thee, Asclepius, and so 'tis [only] right I should devote toady's to Tat; and this the more because 'tis the abridgement of the General Sermons (Logoi) which he has had addressed to him.

"God, Father and the Good", then, Tat, hath the same nature, or more exactly, energy.

For nature is a predicate of growth, and used of things that change, both mobile and immobile, that is to say, both human and divine, each one of which He willeth into being.

But energy consists in something else, as we have shown in treating of the rest, both things divine and human things; which thing we ought to have in mind when treating of the Good.

2. God's energy is then His Will; further His essence is to will the being of all things. For what is "God and Father and the Good" but the "to be" of all that are not yet? Nay, subsistence self of everything that is; this, then, is God, this Father, this the Good; to Him is added naught of all the rest.

And though the Cosmos, that is to say the Sun, is also sire himself to them that share in him; yet so far is he not the cause of good unto the lives, he is not even of their living.

So that e'en if he be a sire, he is entirely so by compulsion of the Good's Good-will, apart from which nor being nor becoming could e'er be.

3. Again, the parent is the children's cause, both on the father's and the mother's side, only by sharing in the Good's desire [that doth pour] through the Sun. It is the Good which doeth the creating.

And such a power can be possessed by no one else than Him alone who taketh naught, but wills all things to be; I will not, Tat, say "makes".

For that the maker is defective for long periods (in which he sometimes makes, and sometimes doth not make) both in the quality and in the quantity [of what he makes]; in that he sometimes maketh them so many and such like, and sometimes the reverse.

But "God and Father and the Good" is [cause] for all to be. So are at least these things for those who can see.

4. For It doth will to be, and It is both Itself and most of all by reason of Itself. Indeed, all other things beside are just because of It; for the distinctive feature of the Good is "that it should be known". Such is the Good, O Tat.

Tat: Thou hast, O father, filled us so full of this so good and fairest sight, that thereby my mind's eye hath now become for me almost a thing to worship.

For that the vision of the Good doth not, like the sun's beam, firelike blaze on the eyes and make them close; nay, on the contrary, it shineth forth and maketh to increase the seeing of the eye, as far as e'er a man

hath the capacity to hold the inflow of the radiance that the mind alone can see.

Not only does it come more swiftly down to us, but it does us no harm, and is instinct with all immortal life.

5. They who are able to drink in a somewhat more than others of this Sight, oftentimes from out the body fall asleep in this fairest Spectacle, as was the case with Uranus and Cronus, our forebears. may this be out lot too, O father mine!

Hermes: Yea, may it be, my son! But as it is, we are not yet strung to the Vision, and not as yet have we the power our mind's eye to unfold and gaze upon the Beauty of the Good - Beauty that naught can e'er corrupt or any comprehend.

For only then wilt thou upon It gaze when thou canst say no word concerning It. For Gnosis of the Good is holy silence and a giving holiday to every sense.

6. For neither can he who perceiveth It, perceive aught else; nor he who gazeth on It, gaze on aught else; nor hear aught else, nor stir his body any way. Staying his body's every sense and every motion he stayeth still.

And shining then all round his mond, It shines through his whole soul, and draws it out of body, transforming all of him to essence.

For it is possible, my son, that a man's soul should be made like to God, e'en while it still is in a body, if it doth contemplate the Beauty of the Good.

7. Tat: Made like to God? What dost thou, father, mean?

Hermes: Of every soul apart are transformations, son.

Tat: What meanest thou? Apart?

Hermes: Didst thou not, in the General Sermons, hear that from one Soul - the All-soul - come all these souls which are made to revolve in all the cosmos, as though divided off?

Of these souls, then, it is that there are many changes, some to a happier lot and some to [just] the contrary of this.

Thus some that were creeping things change into things that in the water dwell, the souls of water things change to earth-dwellers, those that live on earth change to things with wings, and souls that live in air change to men, while human souls reach the first step of deathlessness changed into daimones.

And so they circle to the choir of the Inerrant Gods; for of the Gods there are two choirs, the one Inerrant, and the other Errant. And this is the most perfect glory of the soul.

8. But if a soul on entering the body of a man persisteth in its vice, it neither tasteth deathlessness nor shareth in the Good; but speeding back again it turns into the path that leads to creeping things. This is the sentence of the vicious soul.

And the soul's vice is ignorance. For that the soul who hath no knowledge of the things that are, or knowledge of their nature, or of Good, is blinded by the body's passions and tossed about.

This wretched soul, not knowing what she is, becomes the slave of bodies of strange form in sorry plight, bearing the body as a load; not as the ruler, but the ruled. This [ignorance] is the soul's vice.

9. But on the other hand the virtue of the soul is Gnosis. For he who knows, he good and pious is, and still while on the earth divine.

Tat: But who is such an one, O father mine?

Hermes: He who doth not say much or lend his ear to much. For he who spendeth time in arguing and hearing arguments, doth shadow-fight. For "God, the Father and the Good", is not to be obtained by speech or hearing.

And yet though this is so, there are in all the beings senses, in that they cannot without senses be.

But Gnosis is far different from sense. For sense is brought about by that which hath the mastery o'er us, while Gnosis is the end <i.e., goal> of science, and science is God's gift.

10. All science is incorporeal, the instrument it uses being the mind, just as the mind employs the body.

Both then come into bodies, [I mean] both things that are cognizable by mind alone and things material. For all things must consist out of antithesis and contrariety; and this can otherwise not be.

Tat: Who then is this material God of whom thou speakest?

Hermes: Cosmos is beautiful, but is not good - for that it is material and freely passible; and though it is the first of all things passible, yet is it in the second rank of being and wanting in itself.

And though it never hath itself its birth in time, but ever is, yet is its being in becoming, becoming for all time the genesis of qualities and quantities; for it is mobile and all material motion's genesis.

11. It is intelligible rest that moves material motion in this way, since Cosmos is a sphere - that is to say, a head. And naught of head above's material, as naught of feet below's intelligible, but all material.

And head itself is moved in a sphere-like way - that is to say, as head should move, is mind.

All then that are united to the "tissue" of this "head" (in which is soul) are in their nature free from death - just as when body hath been made in soul, are things that hath more soul than body.

Whereas those things which are at greater distance from this "tissue" - there, where are things which have a greater share of body than of soul - are by their nature subject unto death.

The whole, however, is a life; so that the universe consists of both the hylic and of the intelligible.

12. Again, the Cosmos is the first of living things, while man is second after it, though first of things subject to death.



Man hath the same ensouling power in him as all the rest of living things; yet is he not only not good, but even evil, for that he's subject unto death.

For though the Cosmos also is not good in that it suffers motion, it is not evil, in that it is not subject to death. But man, in that he's subject both to motion and to death, is evil.

13. Now then the principles of man are this-wise vehicled: mind in the reason (logos), the reason in the soul, soul in the spirit <or, rather, vital spirits>, and spirit in the body.

Spirit pervading [body] by means of veins and arteries and blood, bestows upon the living creature motion, and as it were doth bear it in a way.

For this cause some do think the soul is blood, in that they do mistake its nature, not knowing that [at death] it is iteh spirit that must first withdraw into the soul, whereon the blood congeals and veins and arteries are emptied, and then the living creature <or life> is withdrawn; and this is body's death.

14. Now from one Source all things depend; while Source [dependeth] from the One and Only [One]. Source is, moreover, moved to become Source again; whereas the One standeth perpetually and is not moved.

Three then are they: "God, the Father and the Good", Cosmos and man.

God doth contain Cosmos; Cosmos [containeth] man. Cosmos is e'er God's Son, man as it were Cosmos' child.

15. Not that, however, God ignoreth man; nay, right well doth He know him, and willeth to be known.

This is the sole salvation for a man - God's Gnosis. This is the Way Up to the Mount.

By Him alone the soul becometh good, not whiles is good, whiles evil, but [good] out of necessity.

Tat: What dost thou mean, Thrice-greatest one?

Hermes: Behold an infant's soul, my son, that is not yet cut off, because its body is still small and not as yet come unto its full bulk.

Tat: How?

Hermes: A thing of beauty altogether is [such a soul] to see, not yet befouled by body's passions, still all but hanging from the Cosmic Soul!

But when the body grows in bulk and draweth down the soul into its mass, then doth the soul cut off itself and bring upon itself forgetfulness, and no more shareth in the Beautiful and the Good. And this forgetfulness becometh vice.

16. It is the same for them who go out from the body.

For when the soul withdraws into itself, the spirit doth contract itself within the blood, and the soul within the spirit. And then the mind, stripped of its wrappings, and naturally divine, taking unto itself a fiery body, doth traverse every space, after abandoning the soul unto its judgement and whatever chastisement it hath deserved.

Tat: What dost thou, father, mean by this? The mind is parted from soul and soul from spirit? Whereas thou said'st the soul was the mind's vesture, and the soul's the spirit.

17. Hermes: The hearer, son, should think with him who speaks and breathe with him; nay, he should have a hearing subtler than the voice of him who speaks.

It is, son, in a body made of earth that this arrangement of the vestures comes to pass. For in a body made of earth it is impossible the mind should take its seat itself by its own self in nakedness.

For neither is it possible on the one hand the earthly body should contain so much immortality, nor on the other that so great a virtue should endure a body passible in such close contact with it. It taketh, then, the soul for as it were an envelope.

And soul itself, being too and thing divine, doth use the spirit as its envelope, while spirit doth pervade the living creature.

18. When then the mind doth free itself from the earth-body, it straightway putteth on its proper robe of fire, with which it could not dwell in an earth-body.

For earth doth not bear fire; for it is all set in a blaze even by a small spark. And for this cause is water poured around earth, to be a guard and wall, to keep the blazing of the fire away.

But mind, the swiftest thing of all divine outthinkings, and swifter than all elements, hath for its body fire.

For mind being builder doth use the fire as tool for the construction of all things - the Mind of all [for the construction] of all things, but that of man only for things on earth.

Stript of its fire the mind on earth cannot make things divine, for it is human in its dispensation.

19. The soul in man, however - not every soul, but one that pious is - is a daimonic something and divine.

And such a soul when from the body freed, if it have fought the fight of piety - the fight of piety is to know God and to do wrong to no man - such a soul becomes entirely mind.

Whereas the impious soul remains in its own essence, chastised by its own self, and seeking for an earthly body where to enter, if only it be human.

For that no other body can contain a human soul; nor is it right that any human soul should fall into the body of a thing that doth possess no reason. For that the law of God is this: to guard the human soul from such tremendous outrage.

20. Tat: How father, then, is a man's soul chastised?

Hermes: What greater chastisement of any human soul can there be, son, than lack of piety? What fire has so fierce a flame as lack of piety? What ravenous beast so mauls the body as lack of piety the very soul?

Dost thou not see what hosts of ills the impious soul doth bear?

It shrieks and screams: I burn; I am ablaze; I know not what to cry or do; ah, wretched me, I am devoured by all the ills that compass me about; alack, poor me, I neither see nor hear!

Such are the cries wrung from a soul chastised; not, as the many think, and thou, son, dost suppose, that a [man's] soul, passing from body, is changed into a beast.

Such is a very grave mistake, for that the way a soul doth suffer chastisement is this:

21. When mind becomes a daimon, the law requires that it should take a fiery body to execute the services of God; and entering in the soul most impious it scourgeth it with whips made of its sins.

And then the impious soul, scourged with its sins, is plunged in murders, outrage, blasphemy, in violence of all kinds, and all the other things whereby mankind is wronged.

But on the pious soul the mind doth mount and guide it to the Gnosis' Light. And such a soul doth never tire in songs of praise [to God] and pouring blessing on all men, and doing good in word and deed to all, in imitation of its Sire.

22. Wherefore, my son, thou shouldst give praise to God and pray that thou mayst have thy mind Good Mind. It is, then, to a better state the soul doth pass; it cannot to a worse.

Further there is an intercourse of souls; those of the gods have intercourse with those of men, and those of men with souls of creatures which possess no reason.

The higher, further, have in charge the lower; the gods look after men, men after animals irrational, while God hath charge of all; for He is higher than them all and all are less than He.

Cosmos is subject, then, to God, man to the Cosmos, and irrationals to man. But God is o'er them all, and God contains them all.

God's rays, to use a figure, are His energies; the Cosmos's are natures, the arts and sciences are man's.

The energies act through the Cosmos, thence through the nature-rays of Cosmos upon man; the nature-rays [act] through the elements, man [acteth] through the sciences and arts.

23. This is the dispensation of the universe, depending from the nature of the One, pervading [all things] through the Mind, than which is naught diviner nor of greater energy; and naught a greater means for the at-oning men to gods and gods to men.

He, [Mind,] is the Good Daimon. Blessed the soul that is most filled with Him, and wretched is the soul that's empty of the Mind.

Tat: Father, what dost thou mean, again?

Hermes: Dost think then, son, that every soul hath the Good [Mind]? For 'tis of Him we speak, not of the mind in service of which we were just speaking, the mind sent down for [the soul's] chastisement.

24. For soul without the mind "can neither speak nor act". For oftentimes the mind doth leave the soul, and at that time the soul neither sees nor understands, but is just like a thing that hath no reason. Such is the power of mind.

Yet doth it not endure a sluggish soul, but leaveth such a soul tied to the body and bound tight down by it. Such soul, my son, doth not have Mind; and therefore such an one should not be called a man. For that man is a thing-of-life <or animal> divine; man is not measured with the rest of lives of things upon the earth, but with the lives above in heaven, who are called gods.

Nay more, if we must boldly speak the truth, the true "man" is e'en higher than the gods, or at the [very] least the gods and men are very whit in power each with the other equal.

25. For no one of the gods in heaven shall come down to the earth, o'er-stepping heaven's limit; whereas man doth mount up to heaven and measure it; he knows what things of it are high, what things are low, and learns precisely all things else besides. And greater thing than all; without e'en quitting earth, he doth ascend above. So vast a sweep doth he possess of ecstasy.

For this cause can a man dare say that man on earth is god subject to death, while god in heaven is man from death immune.

Wherefore the dispensation of all things is brought about by means of there, the twain - Cosmos and Man - but by the One.

## **XI. Mind Unto Hermes**

This complex text is written as a revelation from the divine Mind - the "Man-Shepherd" of CH I - to Hermes, concerning the nature of God and the universe. Difficult enough in its own right, it has been made rather more so by some of Mead's most opaque prose. I have tried to insert clarifications where these are most needed.

Some notes on terminology may also be useful. The term *Aeon* here, as in many of the so-called "Gnostic" writings, refers to the timeless and spaceless realm of ideal being. The word *cosmos* means both "order" and "beauty" - the same root appears in the word "cosmetic". Additionally, the words *genesis* and *becoming* in the translation are the same word in the Greek original.

Finally, the word "inactive" in square brackets near the beginning of section 13 is Mead's, intended to fill a lacuna in the text. The more usual conjecture, as he comments, is "apart from God".

1. Mind: Master this sermon (logos), then, Thrice-greatest Hermes, and bear in mind the spoken words; and as it hath come unto Me to speak, I will no more delay.

Hermes: As many men say many things, and these diverse, about the All and Good, I have not learned the truth. Make it, then, clear to me, O Master mine! For I can trust the explanation of these things, which comes from Thee alone.

2. Mind: Hear [then], My son, how standeth God and All.

God; Aeon; Cosmos; Time; Becoming.

God maketh Aeon; Aeon, Cosmos; Cosmos, Time; and Time, Becoming <or Genesis>.

The Good - the Beautiful, Wisdom, Blessedness - is <the> essence, as it were, of God; of Aeon, <the essence is> Sameness; of Cosmos, Order; of Time, Change; and of Becoming, Life and Death.

The energies of God are Mind and Soul; of Aeon, lastingness and deathlessness; of Cosmos, restoration and the opposite thereof; of Time, increase and decrease; and of Becoming, quality.

Aeon is, then, in God; Cosmos, in Aeon; in Cosmos; Time; in Time, Becoming.

Aeon stands firm round God; Cosmos is moved in Aeon; Time hath its limits <or is accomplished> in the Cosmos; Becoming doth become in Time.

3. The source, therefore, of all is God; their essence, Aeon; their matter, Cosmos.

God's power is Aeon; Aeon's work is Cosmos - which never hath become, yet ever doth become by Aeon.

Therefore will Cosmos never be destroyed, for Aeon's indestructible; nor doth a whit of things in Cosmos perish, for Cosmos is enwrapped by Aeon round on every side.

Hermes: But God's Wisdom - what is that?

Mind: The Good and Beautiful, and Blessedness, and Virtue's all, and Aeon.

Aeon, then, ordereth [Cosmos], imparting deathlessness and lastingness to matter.

4. For its beginning doth depend on Aeon, as Aeon doth on God.

Now Genesis <or Becoming> and Time, in Heaven and upon the Earth, are of two natures.

In Heaven they are unchangeable and indestructible, but on the Earth they're subject unto change and to destruction.

Further, the Aeon's soul is God; the Cosmos' soul is Aeon; the Earth's soul, Heaven.

And God <is> in Mind; and Mind, in Soul; and Soul, in Matter; and all of them through Aeon.

But all this Body, in which are all the bodies, is full of Soul; and Soul is full of Mind, and Mind of God.

It <i.e., Soul> fills it <i.e., the Body of the Cosmos> from within, and from without encircles it, making the All to live.

Without, this vast and perfect Life [encircles] Cosmos; within, it fills [it with] all lives; above, in Heaven, continuing in sameness; below, on Earth, changing becoming.

5. And Aeon doth preserve this [Cosmos], or by Necessity, or by Foreknowledge, or by Nature, or by whatever else a man supposes or shall suppose. And all is this - God energizing.

The Energy of God is Power that naught can e'er surpass, a Power with which no one can make comparison of any human thing at all, or any thing divine.

Wherefore, O Hermes, never think that aught of things above or things below is like to God, for thou wilt fall from truth. For naught is like to That which hath no like, and is Alone and One.

And do not ever think that any other can possibly possess His power; for what apart from Him is there of life, and deathlessness and change of quality? For what else should He make?

God's not inactive, since all things [then] would lack activity; for all are full of God.

But neither in the Cosmos anywhere, nor in aught else, is there inaction. For that "inaction" is a name that cannot be applied to either what doth make or what is made.

6. But all things must be made; both ever made, and also in accordance with the influence of every space.



For He who makes, is in them all; not stablished in some one of them, nor making one thing only, but making all.

For being Power, He energizeth in the things He makes and is not independent of them - although the things He makes are subject to Him.

Now gaze through Me upon the Cosmos that's now subject to thy sight; regard its Beauty carefully - Body in pure perfection, though one than which there's no more ancient one, ever in prime of life, and ever-young, nay, rather, in even fuller and yet fuller prime!

7. Behold, again, the seven subject Worlds; ordered by Aeon's order, and with their varied course full-filling Aeon!

[See how] all things [are] full of light, and nowhere [is there] fire; for 'tis the love and the blending of the contraries and the dissimilars that doth give birth to light down shining by the energy of God, the Father of all good, the Leader of all order, and Ruler of the seven world-orderings!

[Behold] the Moon, forerunner of them all, the instrument of nature, and the transmuter of its lower matter!

[Look at] the Earth set in the midst of All, foundation of the Cosmos Beautiful, feeder and nurse of things on Earth!

And contemplate the multitude of deathless lives, how great it is, and that of lives subject to death; and midway, between both, immortal [lives] and mortal, [see thou] the circling Moon.

8. And all are full of soul, and all are moved by it, each in its proper way; some round the Heaven, others around the Earth; [see] how the right [move] not unto the left, nor yet the left unto the right; nor the above below, nor the below above.

And that all there are subject unto Genesis, My dearest Hermes, thou hast no longer need to learn of Me. For that they bodies are, have souls, and they are moved.

But 'tis impossible for them to come together into one without some one to bring them [all] together. It must, then, be that such a one as this must be some one who's wholly One.

9. For as the many motions of them [all] are different, and as their bodies are not like, yet has one speed been ordered for them all, it is impossible that there should be two or more makers for them.

For that one single order is not kept among "the many"; but rivalry will follow of the weaker with the stronger, and they will strive.

And if the maker of the lives that suffer change and death, should be another <from the maker of the immortals>, he would desire to make the deathless ones as well; just as the maker of the deathless ones, [to make the lives] that suffer death.

But come! if there be two - if matter's one, and Soul is one, in whose hands would there be the distribution for the making? Again, if both of them have some of it, in whose hands may be the greater part?

10. But thus conceive it, then; that every living body doth consist of soul and matter, whether [that body be] of an immortal, or a mortal, or an irrational [life].

For that all living bodies are ensouled; whereas, upon the other hand, those that live not, are matter by itself.

And, in like fashion, Soul when in its self is, after its own maker, cause of life; but the cause of all life is He who makes the things that cannot die.

Hermes: How, then, is it that, first, lives subject to death are other than the deathless ones? And, next, how is it that Life which knows no death, and maketh deathlessness, doth not make animals immortal?

11. Mind: First, that there is some one who does these things, is clear; and, next, that He is also One, is very manifest. For, also, Soul is one, and Life is one, and Matter one.

Hermes: But who is He?

Mind: Who may it other be than the One God? Whom else should it besem to put Soul into lives but God alone? One, then, is God.

It would indeed be most ridiculous, if when thou dost confess the Cosmos to be one, Sun one, Moon one, and Godhead one, thou shouldst wish God Himself to be some one or other of a number!

12. All things, therefore, He makes, in many [ways]. And what great thing is it for God to make life, soul, and deathlessness, and change, when thou [thyself] dost do so many things?

For thou dost see, and speak, and hear, and smell, and taste, and touch, and walk, and think, and breathe. And it is not one man who smells, another one who walks, another one who thinks, and [yet] another one who breathes. But one is he who doth all these.

And yet no one of these could be apart from God. For just as, should thou cease from these, thou wouldst no longer be a living thing, so also, should God cease from them (a thing not law to say), no longer is He God.

13. For if it hath been shown that no thing can [inactive] be, how much less God? For if there's aught he doth not make (if it be law to say), He is imperfect. But if He is not only not inactive, but perfect [God], then He doth make all things.

Give thou thyself to Me, My Hermes, for a little while, and thou shalt understand more easily how that God's work is one, in order that all things may be - that are being made, or once have been, or that are going to be made. And this is, My beloved, Life; this is the Beautiful; this is the Good; this, God.

14. And if thou wouldst in practice understand [this work], behold what taketh place with thee desiring to beget. Yet this is not like unto that, for He doth not enjoy.

For that indeed He hath no other one to share in what He works, for working by Himself, He ever is at work, Himself being what He doth. For did He separate Himself from it, all things would [then] collapse, and all must die, Life ceasing.

But if all things are lives, and also Life is one; then, one is God. And, furthermore, if all are lives, both those in Heaven and those on Earth,

and One Life in them all is made to be by God, and God is it <i.e., God is the One Life> - then, all are made by God.

Life is the making-one of Mind and Soul; accordingly Death is not the destruction of those that are at-oned, but the dissolving of their union.

15. Aeon, moreover, is God's image; Cosmos [is] Aeon's; the Sun, of Cosmos; and Man, [the image] of the Sun.

The people call change death, because the body is dissolved, and life, when it's dissolved, withdraws to the unmanifest. But in this sermon (logos), Hermes, My beloved, as thou dost hear, I say the Cosmos also suffers change - for that a part of it each day is made to be in the unmanifest - yet it is ne'er dissolved.

These are the passions of the Cosmos - revolvings and concealments; revolving is conversion and concealment renovation.

16. The Cosmos is all-formed - not having forms external to itself, but changing them itself within itself. Since, then, Cosmos is made to be all-formed, what may its maker be? For that, on the one hand, He should not be void of all form; and, on the other hand, if He's all-formed, He will be like the Cosmos. Whereas, again, has He a single form, He will thereby be less than Cosmos.

What, then, say we He is? - that we may not bring round our sermon (logos) into doubt; for naught that mind conceives of God is doubtful.

He, then, hath one idea, which is His own alone, which doth not fall beneath the sight, being bodiless, and [yet] by means of bodies manifesteth all [ideas]. And marvel not that there's a bodiless idea.

17. For it is like the form of reason (logos) and mountain-tops in pictures. For they appear to stand out strongly from the rest, but really are quite smooth and flat.

And now consider what is said more boldly, but more truly!

Just as man cannot live apart from Life, so neither can God live without [His] doing good. For this is as it were the life and motion as it were of God - to move all things and make them live.

18. Now some of the things said should bear a sense peculiar to themselves. So understand, for instance, what I'm going to say.

All are in God, [but] not as lying in a place. For place is both a body and immovable, and things that lie do not have motion.

Now things lie one way in the bodiless, another way in being made manifest.

Think, [then,] of Him who doth contain them all; and think, that than the bodiless naught is more comprehensive, or swifter, or more potent, but it is the most comprehensive, the swiftest, and most potent of them all.

19. And, thus, think from thyself, and bid thy soul go unto any land, and there more quickly than thy bidding will it be. And bid it journey oceanwards; and there, again, immediately 'twill be, not as if passing on from place to place, but as if being there.

And bid it also mount to heaven; and it will need no wings, not will aught hinder it, nor fire of sun, nor aether, nor vortex-swirl, nor bodies of the other stars; but, cutting through them all, it will soar up to the last Body [of them all]. And shouldst thou will to break through this as well, and contemplate what is beyond - if there be aught beyond the Cosmos; it is permitted thee.

20. Behold what power, what swiftness, thou dost have! And canst thou do all of these things, and God not [do them]?

Then, in this way know God; as having all things in Himself as thoughts, the whole Cosmos itself.

If, then, thou dost not make thyself like unto God, thou canst not know Him. For like is knowable unto like [alone].

Make, [then,] thyself to grow to the same stature as the Greatness which transcends all measure; leap forth from every body; transcend all time; become Eternity <literally, Aeon>; and [thus] shalt thou know God.

Conceiving nothing is impossible unto thyself, think thyself deathless and able to know all - all arts, all sciences, the way of every life.

Become more lofty than all height, and lower than all depth. Collect into thyself all senses of [all] creatures - of fire, [and] water, dry and moist. Think that thou art at the same time in every place - in earth, in sea, in sky; not yet begotten, in the womb, young, old, [and] dead, in after-death conditions.

And if thou knowest all these things at once - times, places, doings, qualities, and quantities; thou canst know God.

21. But if thou lockest up thy soul within thy body, and dost debase it, saying: I nothing know; I nothing can; I fear the sea; I cannot scale the sky; I know not who I was, who I shall be - what is there [then] between [thy] God and thee?

For thou canst know naught of things beautiful and good so long as thou dost love thy body and art bad.

The greatest bad there is, is not to know God's Good; but to be able to know [Good], and will, and hope, is a Straight Way, the Good's own [Path], both leading there and easy.

If thou but settest thy foot thereon, 'twill meet thee everywhere, 'twill everywhere be seen, both where and when thou dost expect it not - waking, sleeping, sailing, journeying, by night, by day, speaking, [and] saying naught. For there is naught that is not image of the Good.

22. Hermes: Is God unseen?

Mind: Hush! Who is more manifest than He? For this one reason hath He made all things, that through them all thou mayest see Him.

This is the Good of God, this [is] His Virtue - that He may be manifest through all.

For naught's unseen, even of things that are without a body. Mind sees itself in thinking, God in making.

So far these things have been made manifest to thee, Thrice-greatest one! Reflect on all the rest in the same way with thyself, and thou shalt not be led astray.

## XII. About The Common Mind

The "common mind" discussed in this dialogue is the same Mind which appears as a divine power in other parts of the Hermetic literature. It is identical, as well, with the "Good Daimon" whose words are quoted at several points here and elsewhere.

The Greek word *logos* - which means both "word" and "reason", among other things - is central to much of the argument, and it's unfortunate that English has no way to express the same complex of meanings. The praise of reason in parts 13-14 is also, and equally, a praise of human language, and this sort of double meaning plays a part elsewhere in this and other parts of the Hermetic literature.

1. Hermes: The Mind, O Tat, is of God's very essence - (if such a thing as essence of God there be) - and what that is, it and it only knows recisely. The Mind, then, is not separated off from God's essentiality, but is united to it, as light to sun. This Mind in men is God, and for this cause some of mankind are gods, and their humanity is nigh unto divinity. For the Good Daimon said: "Gods are immortal men, and men are mortal gods."

2. But in irrational lives Mind is their nature. For where is Soul, there too is Mind; just as where Life, there is there also Soul. But in irrational lives their soul is life devoid of mind; for Mind is the in-worker of the souls of men for good - He works on them for their own good. In lives irrational He doth co-operate with each one's nature; but in the souls of men He counteracteth them.

For every soul, when it becomes embodied, is instantly depraved by pleasure and by pain.

For in a compound body, just like juices, pain and pleasure seethe, and into them the soul, on entering in, is plunged.

3. O'er whatsoever souls the Mind doth, then, preside, to these it showeth its own light, by acting counter to their prepossessions, just as a good physician doth upon the body prepossessed by sickness, pain inflict, burning or lancing it for sake of health.

In just the selfsame way the Mind inflicteth pain on the soul, to rescue it from pleasure, whence comes its every ill.

The great ill of the soul is godlessness; then followeth fancy for all evil things and nothing good.

So, then, Mind counteracting it doth work good on the soul, as the physician health upon the body.

4. But whatsoever human souls have not the Mind as pilot, they share in the same fate as souls of lives irrational. For [Mind] becomes co-worker with them, giving full play to the desires toward which [such souls] are borne - [desires] that from the rush of lust strain after the irrational; [so that such human souls,] just like irrational animals, cease not irrationally to rage and lust, nor are they ever satiate of ills. For passions and irrational desires are ills exceeding great; and over these God hath set up the Mind to play the part of judge and executioner.

5. Tat: In that case, father mine, the teaching (logos) as to Fate, which previously thou didst explain to me, risks to be upset. For that if it be absolutely fated for a man to fornicate, or commit sacrilege, or do some other evil deed, why is he punished - when he hath done the deed from Fate's necessity? Hermes: All works, my son, are Fate's; and without Fate naught of things corporal - or <i.e., either> good, or ill - can come to pass. But it is fated, too, that he who doeth ill, shall suffer. And for this cause he doth it - that he may suffer what he suffereth, because he did it.

6. But for the moment, [Tat,] let be the teaching as to vice and Fate, for we have spoken of these things in other [of our sermons]; but now our teaching (logos) is about the Mind: - what Mind can do, and how it is [so] different - in men being such and such, and in irrational lives [so] changed; and [then] again that in irrational lives it is not of a beneficial nature, while that in men it quencheth out the wrathful and the lustful elements. Of men, again, we must class some as led by reason, and others as unreasoning.

7. But all men are subject to Fate, and genesis and change, for these are the beginning and the end of Fate.



And though all men do suffer fated things, those led by reason (those whom we said Mind doth guide) do not endure <a> like suffering with the rest; but, since they've freed themselves from viciousness, not being bad, they do not suffer bad.

Tat: How meanest thou again, my father? Is not the fornicator bad; the murderer bad; and [so with] all the rest?

Hermes: [I meant not that;] but that the Mind-led man, my son, though not a fornicator, will suffer just as though he had committed fornication, and though he be no murderer, as though he had committed murder. The quality of change he can no more escape than that of genesis. But it is possible for one who hath the Mind, to free himself from vice.

8. Wherefore I've ever heard, my son, Good Daimon also say - (and had He set it down in written words, He would have greatly helped the race of men; for He alone, my son, doth truly, as the Firstborn God, gazing on all things, give voice to words (logoi) divine) - yea, once I heard Him say: "All things are one, and most of all the bodies which the mind alone perceives. Our life is owing to [God's] Energy and Power and Aeon. His Mind is good, so is His Soul as well. And this being so, intelligible things know naught of separation. So, then, Mind, being Ruler of all things, and being Soul of God, can do whate'er it wills."

9. So do thou understand, and carry back this word (logos) unto the question thou didst ask before - I mean about Mind's Fate. For if thou dost with accuracy, son, eliminate [all] captious arguments (logoi), thou wilt discover that of very truth the Mind, the Soul of God, doth rule o'er all - o'er Fate, and Law, and all things else; and nothing is impossible to it - neither o'er Fate to set a human soul, nor under Fate to set [a soul] neglectful of what comes to pass. Let this so far suffice from the Good Daimon's most good [words].

Tat: Yea, [words] divinely spoken, father mine, truly and helpfully. But further still explain me this.

10. Thou said'st that Mind in lives irrational worked in them as [their] nature, co-working with their impulses. But impulses of lives irrational, as I do think, are passions.

Now if the Mind co-worketh with [these] impulses, and if the impulses

of [lives] irrational be passions, then is Mind also passion, taking its color from the passions.

Hermes: Well put, my son! Thou questionest right nobly, and it is just that I as well should answer [nobly].

11. All things incorporeal when in a body are subject unto passion, and in the proper sense they are [themselves] all passions. For every thing that moves itself is incorporeal; while every thing that's moved is body.

Incorporeals are further moved by Mind, and movement's <i.e., movement is> passion.

Both, then, are subject unto passion - both mover and the moved, the former being ruler and the latter ruled.

But when a man hath freed himself from body, then is he also freed from passion.

But, more precisely, son, naught is impassible, but all are passible. Yet passion differeth from passibility; for that the one is active, while the other's passive.

Incorporeals moreover act upon themselves, for either they are motionless or they are moved; but whichsoe'er it be, it's passion. But bodies are invariably acted on, and therefore they are passible. Do not, then, let terms trouble thee; action and passion are both the selfsame thing. To use the fairer sounding term, however, does no harm.

12. Tat: Most clearly hast thou, father mine, set forth the teaching (logos).

Hermes: Consider this as well, my son; that these two things God hath bestowed on man beyond all mortal lives - both mind and speech (logos) equal to immortality. He hath the mind for knowing God and uttered speech (logos) for eulogy of Him.

And if one useth these for what he ought, he'll differ not a whit from the immortals. Nay, rather, on departing from the body, he will be guided by the twain unto the Choir of Gods and Blessed Ones.

13. Tat: Why, father mine! - do not the other lives make use of speech (logos)?

Hermes: Nay, son; but <i.e., only> use of voice; speech is far different from voice. For speech is general among all men, while voice doth differ in each class of living thing.

Tat: But with men also, father mine, according to each race, speech differs.

Hermes: Yea, son, but man is one; so also speech is one and is interpreted, and it is found the same in Egypt, and in Persia, and in Greece. Thou seemest, son, to be in ignorance of Reason's (Logos) worth and greatness. For that the Blessed God, Good Daimon, hath declared: "Soul is in Body, Mind in Soul; but Reason (Logos) is in Mind, and Mind in God; and God is Father of [all] these."

14. The Reason, then, is the Mind's image, and Mind God's [image]; while Body is [the image] of the Form; and Form [the image] of the Soul. The subtlest part of Matter is, then, Air <or vital spirit>; of Air, Soul; of Soul, Mind; and of Mind, God.

And God surroundeth all and permeateth all; while Mind Surroundeth Soul, Soul Air, Air Matter.

Necessity and Providence and Nature are instruments of Cosmos and of Matter's ordering; while of intelligible things each is Essence, and Sameness is their Essence.

But of the bodies of the Cosmos each is many; for through possessiong Sameness, [these] composed bodies, though they do change from one into another of themselves, do nathless keep the incorruption of their Sameness.

15. Whereas in all the rest of composed bodies, of each there is a certain number; for without number structure cannot be, or composition, or decomposition. Now it is units that give birth to number and increase it, and, being decomposed, are taken back again into themselves.

Matter is one; and this whole Cosmos - the mighty God and image of the mightier One, both with Him unified, and the conservator of the Will and Order of the Father - is filled full of Life.

Naught is there in it throughout the whole of Aeon, the Father's [everlasting] Re-establishment - nor of the whole, nor of the parts - which doth not live.

For not a single thing that's dead, hath been, or is, or shall be in [this] Cosmos. For that the Father willed it should have Life as long as it should be. Wherefore it needs must be a God.

16. How then, O son, could there be in the God, the image of the Father, in the plenitude of Life - dead things? For that death is corruption, and corruption destruction.

How then could any part of that which knoweth no corruption be corrupted, or any whit of him the God destroyed? Tat: Do they not, then, my father, die - the lives in it, that are its parts? Hermes: Hush, son! - led into error by the term in use for what takes place. They do not die, my son, but are dissolved as compound bodies. Now dissolution is not death, but dissolution of a compound; it is dissolved not so that it may be destroyed, but that it may become renewed. For what is the activity of life? Is it not motion? What then in Cosmos is there that hath no motion? Naught is there, son!

17. Tat: Doth not Earth even, father, seem to thee to have no motion? Hermes: Nay, son; but rather that she is the only thing which, though in very rapid motion, is also stable. For how would it not be a thing to laugh at, that the Nurse of all should have no motion, when she engenders and brings forth all things?

For 'tis impossible that without motion one who doth engender, should do so.

That thou should ask if the fourth part <or element> is not inert, is most ridiculous; for the body which doth have no motion, gives sign of nothing but inertia.

18. Know, therefore, generally, my son, that all that is in Cosmos is being moved for increase or for decrease.

Now that which is kept moving, also lives; but there is no necessity that that which lives, should be all same. For being simultaneous, the Cosmos, as a whole, is not subject to change, my son, but all its parts are subject unto it; yet naught [of it] is subject to corruption, or destroyed. It is the terms employed that confuse men. For 'tis not genesis that constituteth life, but 'tis sensation; it is not change that constituteth death, but 'tis forgetfulness. Since, then, these things are so, they are immortal all - Matter, [and] Life, [and] Spirit, Mind [and] Soul, of which whatever liveth, is composed.

19. Whatever then doth live, oweth its immortality unto the Mind, and most of all doth man, he who is both recipient of God, and co-essential with Him.

For with this life alone doth God consort; by visions in the night, by tokens in the day, and by all things doth He foretell the future unto him - by birds, by inward parts, by wind, by tree. Wherefore doth man lay claim to know things past, things present and to come.

20. Observe this too, my son; that each one of the other lives inhabiteth one portion of the Cosmos - aquatic creatures water, terrene earth, and aery creatures air; while man doth use all these - earth, water air [and] fire; he seeth Heaven, too, and doth contact it with [his] sense. But God surroundeth all, and permeateth all, for He is energy and power; and it is nothing difficult, my son, to conceive God.

21. But if thou wouldst Him also contemplate, behold the ordering of the Cosmos, and [see] the orderly behavior of its ordering <this is a play on the word "cosmos", which means "order, arrangement">; behold thou the Necessity of things made manifest, and [see] the Providence of things become and things becoming; behold how Matter is all-full of Life; [behold] this so great God in movement, with all the good and noble [ones] - gods, daimones and men!

Tat: But these are purely energies, O father mine!  
Hermes: If, then, they're purely energies, my son - by whom, then, are they energized except by God? Or art thou ignorant, that just as Heaven, Earth, Water, Air, are parts of Cosmos, in just the selfsame way God's parts are Life and Immortality, [and] Energy, and Spirit, and Necessity, and Providence, and Nature, Soul, and Mind, and the Duration <that is, Aeon or Eternity> of all these that is called Good?

And there are naught of things that have become, or are becoming, in which God is not.

22. Tat: Is He in Matter, father, then?

Hermes: Matter, my son, is separate from God, in order that thou may'st attribute to it the quality of space. But what thing else than mass think'st thou it is, if it's not energized? Whereas if it be energized, by whom is it made so? For energies, we said, are parts of God. By whom are, then, all lives enlivened? By whom are things immortal made immortal? By whom changed things made changeable? And whether thou dost speak of Matter, of Body, or of Essence, know that these too are energies of God; and that materiality is Matter's energy, that corporeality is Bodies' energy, and that essentiality doth constituteth the energy of Essence; and this is God - the All.

23. And in the All is naught that is not God. Wherefore nor <i.e., neither> size, nor space, nor quality, nor form, nor time, surroundeth God; for He is All, and All surroundeth all, and permeateth all. Unto this Reason (Logos), son, thy adoration and thy worship pay. There is one way alone to worship God; [it is] not to be bad.

### **XIII. The Secret Sermon on the Mountain**

This dialogue is in many ways the culmination of the whole Corpus, summing up the theory of the Hermetic system at the same time as it provides an intriguing glimpse at the practice. The focus of the dialogue is the experience of Rebirth, which involves the replacement of twelve Tormentors within the self by ten divine Powers, leading to the awakening of knowledge of the self and God.

The "Secret Hymnody" (sections 17-20) is presented as a litany for worship, to be performed twice each day, at sunrise and sunset. It's interesting to note that while the sunrise worship is performed facing east, the sunset worship is done to the south; Egyptian tradition from Pharaonic times onward saw the west as the direction of death.

The usual difficulties with the multiple meanings of the Greek word *logos* appear in the translation, compounded by Mead's awkward style. Additionally, one of Mead's few evasions can be found in section 12, where he relates the twelve Tormentors to the "twelve types-of-life". This should more simply, and more accurately, have been translated as

"the twelve signs of the Zodiac". The Theosophical distaste for astrology may well have been involved here.

1. Tat: [Now] in the General Sermons, father, thou didst speak in riddles most unclear, conversing on Divinity; and when thou saidst no man could e'er be saved before Rebirth, thy meaning thou didst hide.

Further, when I became thy Suppliant, in Wending up the Mount, after thou hadst conversed with me, and when I longed to learn the Sermon (Logos) on Rebirth (for this beyond all other things is just the thing I know not), thou saidst, that thou wouldst give it me - "when thou shalt have become a stranger to the world".

Wherefore I got me ready and made the thought in me a stranger to the world-illusion.

And now do thou fill up the things that fall short in me with what thou saidst would give me the tradition of Rebirth, setting it forth in speech or in the secret way.

I know not, O Thrice-greatest one, from out what matter and what womb Man comes to birth, or of what seed.

2. Hermes: Wisdom that understands in silence [such is the matter and the womb from out which Man is born], and the True Good the seed.

Tat: Who is the sower, father? For I am altogether at a loss.

Hermes: It is the Will of God, my son.

Tat: And of what kind is he that is begotten, father? For I have no share of that essence in me, which doth transcend the senses. The one that is begot will be another one from God, God's Son?

Hermes: All in all, out of all powers composed.

Tat: Thou tellest me a riddle, father, and dost not speak as father unto son.

Hermes: This Race, my son, is never taught; but when He willeth it, its memory is restored by God.

3. Tat: Thou sayest things impossible, O father, things that are forced. Hence answers would I have direct unto these things. Am I a son strange to my father's race?

Keep it not, father, back from me. I am a true-born son; explain to me the manner of Rebirth.

Hermes: What may I say, my son? I can but tell thee this. Whene'er I see within myself the Simple Vision brought to birth out of God's mercy, I have passed through myself into a Body that can never die. And now I am not as I was before; but I am born in Mind.

The way to do this is not taught, and it cannot be seen by the compounded element by means of which thou seest.

Yea, I have had my former composed form dismembered for me. I am no longer touched, but I have touch; I have dimension too; and [yet] am I a stranger to them now.

Thou seest me with eyes, my son; but what I am thou dost not understand [even] with fullest strain of body and of sight.

4. Tat: Into fierce frenzy and mind-fury hast thou plunged me, father, for now no longer do I see myself.

Hermes: I would, my son, that thou hadst e'en passed right through thyself, as they who dream in sleep yet sleepless.

Tat: Tell me this too! Who is the author of Rebirth?

Hermes: The Son of God, the One Man, by God's Will.

5. Tat: Now hast thou brought me, father, unto pure stupefaction. Arrested from the senses which I had before,...<lacuna in original text>; for [now] I see thy Greatness identical with thy distinctive form.



Hermes: Even in this thou art untrue; the mortal form doth change with every day. 'Tis turned by time to growth and waning, as being an untrue thing.

6. Tat: What then is true, Thrice-greatest One?

Hermes: That which is never troubled, son, which cannot be defined; that which no color hath, nor any figure, which is not turned, which hath no garment, which giveth light; that which is comprehensible unto itself [alone], which doth not suffer change; that which no body can contain.

Tat: In very truth I lose my reason, father. Just when I thought to be made wise by thee, I find the senses of this mind of mine blocked up.

Hermes: Thus is it, son: That which is upward borne like fire, yet is borne down like earth, that which is moist like water, yet blows like air, how shalt thou this perceive with sense - the that which is not solid nor yet moist, which naught can bind or loose, of which in power and energy alone can man have any notion - and even then it wants a man who can perceive the Way of Birth in God?

7. Tat: I am incapable of this, O father, then?

Hermes: Nay, God forbid, my son! Withdraw into thyself, and it will come; will, and it comes to pass; throw out of work the body's senses, and thy Divinity shall come to birth; purge from thyself the brutish torments - things of matter.

Tat: I have tormentors then in me, O father?

Hermes: Ay, no few, my son; nay, fearful ones and manifold.

Tat: I do not know them, father.

Hermes: Torment the first is this Not-knowing, son; the second one is Grief; the third, Intemperance; the fourth, Concupiscence; the fifth, Unrighteousness; the sixth is Avarice; the seventh, Error; the eighth is Envy; the ninth, Guile; the tenth is Anger; eleventh, Rashness; the twelfth is Malice.

These are in number twelve; but under them are many more, my son; and creeping through the prison of the body they force the man that's placed therein to suffer in his senses. But they depart (though not all at once) from him who hath been taken pity on by God; and this it is which constitutes the manner of Rebirth. And... <lacuna in the original text> the Reason (Logos).

8. And now, my son, be still and solemn silence keep! Thus shall the mercy that flows on us from God not cease.

Henceforth rejoice, O son, for by the Powers of God thou art being purified for the articulation of the Reason (Logos).

Gnosis of God hath come to us, and when this comes, my son, Not-knowing is cast out.

Gnosis of Joy hath come to us, and on its coming, son, Sorrow will flee away to them who give it room. The Power that follows Joy do I invoke, thy Self-control. O Power most sweet! Let us most gladly bid it welcome, son! How with its coming doth it chase Intemperance away!

9. Now fourth, on Continnence I call, the Power against Desire. <lacuna in the original text> This step, my son, is Righteousness' firm seat. For without judgement <other translators read this "without effort"> see how she hath chased Unrighteousness away. We are made righteous, son, by the departure of Unrighteousness.

Power sixth I call to us - that against Avarice, Sharing-with-all.

And now that Avarice is gone, I call on Truth. And Error flees, and Truth is with us.

See how [the measure of] the Good is full, my son, upon Truth's coming. For Envy is gone from us; and unto Truth is joined the Good as well, with Life and Light.

And now no more doth any torment of the Darkness venture nigh, but vanquished [all] have fled with whirring wings.

10. Thou knowest [now], my son, the manner of Rebirth. And when the Ten is come, my son, that driveth out the Twelve, the Birth in

understanding <literally "intellectual birth", *noera genesis*> is complete, and by this birth we are made into Gods.

Who then doth by His mercy gain this Birth in God, abandoning the body's senses, knows himself [to be of Light and Life] and that he doth consist of these, and [thus] is filled with bliss.

11. Tat: By God made steadfast, father, no longer with the sight my eyes afford I look on things, but with the energy the Mind doth give me through the Powers.

In Heaven am I, in earth, in water, air; I am in animals, in plants; I'm in the womb, before the womb, after the womb; I'm everywhere!

But further tell me this: How are the torments of the Darkness, when they are twelve in number, driven out by the ten Powers? What is the way of it, Thrice-greatest one?

12. Hermes: This dwelling-place through which we have just passed <i.e., the human body>, my son, is constituted from the circle of the twelve types-of-life, this being composed of elements, twelve in number, but of one nature, an omniform idea. For man's delusion there are disunions in them, son, while in their action they are one. Not only can we never part Rashness from Wrath; they cannot even be distinguished.

According to right reason (logos), then, they <the Twelve> naturally withdraw once and for all, in as much as they are chased out by no less than ten powers, that is, the Ten.

For, son, the Ten is that which giveth birth to souls. And Life and Light are unified there, where the One hath being from the Spirit. According then to reason (logos) the One contains the Ten, the Ten the One.

13. Tat: Father, I see the All, I see myself in Mind.

Hermes: This is, my son, Rebirth - no more to look on things from body's view-point (a thing three ways in space extended)... <lacuna in text>, though this Sermon (Logos) on Rebirth, on which I did not comment - in order that we may not be calumniators of the All unto the multitude, to whom indeed God Himself doth will we should not.

14. Tat: Tell me, O father: This Body which is made up of the Powers, is it at any time dissolved?

Hermes: Hush, [son]! Speak not of things impossible, else wilt thou sin and thy Mind's eye be quenched.

The natural body which our sense perceives is far removed from this essential birth.

The first must be dissolved, the last can never be; the first must die, the last death cannot touch.

Dost thou not know thou hast been born a God, Son of the One, even as I myself?

15. Tat: I would, O father, hear the Praise-giving with hymn which thou didst say thou heardest then when thou wert at the Eight [the Ogdoad] of Powers

Hermes: Just as the Shepherd did foretell [I should], my son, [when I came to] the Eight.

Well dost thou haste to "strike thy tent" <i.e., be free from the physical body>, for thou hast been made pure.

The Shepherd, Mind of all masterhood, hath not passed on to me more than hath been written down, for full well did he know that I should of myself be able to learn all, and hear what I should wish, and see all things.

He left to me the making of fair things; wherefore the Powers within me. e'en as they are in all, break into song.

16. Tat: Father, I wish to hear; I long to know these things.

Hermes: Be still, my son; hear the Praise-giving now that keeps [the soul] in tune, Hymn of Re-birth - a hymn I would not have thought fit so readily to tell, had'st thou not reached the end of all.

Wherefore this is not taught, but is kept hid in silence.

Thus then, my son, stand in a place uncovered to the sky, facing the southern wind, about the sinking of the setting sun, and make thy worship; so in like manner too when he doth rise, with face to the east wind.

Now, son, be still!

The Secret Hymnody

17. Let every nature of the World receive the utterance of my hymn!

Open thou Earth! Let every bolt of the Abyss be drawn for me. Stir not, ye Trees!

I am about to hymn creation's Lord, both All and One.

Ye Heavens open and ye Winds stay still; [and] let God's deathless Sphere receive my word (logos)!

For I will sing the praise of Him who founded all; who fixed the Earth, and hung up Heaven, and gave command that Ocean should afford sweet water [to the Earth], to both those parts that are inhabited and those that are not, for the support and use of every man; who made the Fire to shine for gods and men for every act.

Let us together all give praise to Him, sublime above the Heavens, of every nature Lord!

'Tis He who is the Eye of Mind; may He accept the praise of these my Powers!

18. Ye powers that are within me, hymn the One and All; sing with my Will, Powers all that are within me!

O blessed Gnosis, by thee illumined, hymning through thee the Light that mond alone can see, I joy in Joy of Mind.

Sing with me praises all ye Powers!

Sing praise, my Self-control; sing thou through me, my Righteousness, the praises of the Righteous; sing thou, my Sharing-all, the praises of the All; through me sing, Truth, Truth's praises!

Sing thou, O Good, the Good! O Life and Light, from us to you our praises flow!

Father, I give Thee thanks, to Thee Thou Energy of all my Powers; I give Thee thanks, O God, Thou Power of all my Energies!

19. Thy Reason (Logos) sings through me Thy praises. Take back through me the All into [Thy] Reason - [my] reasonable oblation!

Thus cry the Powers in me. They sing Thy praise, Thou All; they do Thy Will.

From Thee Thy Will; to Thee the All. Receive from all their reasonable oblation. The All that is in us, O Life, preserve; O Light<,> illumine it; O God<,> in-spirit it.

It is Thy Mind that plays the shepherd to Thy Word, O Thou Creator, Bestower of the Spirit [upon all].

20. [For] Thou art God, Thy Man thus cries to Thee through Fire, through Air, through Earth, through Water, [and] through Spirit, through Thy creatures.

'Tis from Thy Aeon I have found praise-giving; and in thy Will, the object of my search, have I found rest.

Tat: By thy good pleasure have I seen this praise-giving being sung, O father; I have set it in my Cosmos too.

Hermes: Say in the Cosmos that thy mind alone can see, my son.

Tat: Yea, father, in the Cosmos that the mind alone can see; for I have been made able by thy Hymn, and by thy Praise-giving my mind hath been illumined. But further I myself as well would from my natural mind send praise-giving to God.

21. Hermes: But not unheedfully, my son.

Tat: Aye. What I behold in mind, that do I say.

To thee, thou Parent of my Bringing into Birth, as unto God I, Tat, send reasonable offerings. o God and Father, thou art the Lord, thou art the Mind. Receive from me oblations reasonable as thou would'st wish; for by thy Will all things have been perfected.

Hermes: Send thou oblation, son, acceptable to God, the Sire of all; but add, my son, too, "through the Word" (Logos).

Tat: I give thee, father, thanks for showing me to sing such hymns.

22. Hermes: Happy am I, my son, that though hast brought the good fruits forth of Truth, products that cannot die.

And now that thou hast learnt this lesson from me, make promise to keep silence on thy virtue, and to no soul, my son, make known the handing on to thee the manner of Rebirth, that we may not be thought to be calumniators.

And now we both of us have given heed sufficiently, both I the speaker and the hearer thou.

In Mind hast thou become a Knower of thyself and our [common] Sire.

## The Divine Pymander of Hermes

*Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus, Translation by John  
Everard, [1650]*

### PREFACE

JUDICIOUS READER,

This Book may justly challenge the first place for antiquity, from all the Books in the World, being written some hundreds of years before Moses

his time, as I shall endeavour to make good. The Original (as far as is known to us) is Arabic, and several Translations thereof have been published, as Greek, Latin, French, Dutch, etc., but never English before. It is pity the Learned Translator [Dr. Everard] had not lived, and received himself, the honour, and thanks due to him from the Englishmen for his good will to, and pains for them, in translating a Book of such infinite worth, out of the Original, into their Mother-tongue.

Concerning the Author of the Book itself, Four things are considerable, viz., His Name, Learning, Country, and Time.

1. The name by which he was commonly styled, is Hermes Trismegistus, i.e., Mercurius ter Maximus, or, The thrice greatest Intelligencer. And well might he be called Hermes, for he was the first Intelligencer in the World (as we read of) that communicated Knowledge to the sons of Men, by Writing, or Engraving. He was called Ter Maximus, for some Reasons, which I shall afterwards mention.

2. His Learning will appear, as by his Works; so by the right understanding the Reason of his Name.

3. For his Country, he was King of Egypt.

4. For his Time, it is not without much Controversy, betwixt those that write of this Divine, ancient Author, what time he lived in. Some say he lived after Moses his time, giving this slender Reason for it, viz., Because he was named Ter Maximus: for being preferred [Franciscus Flussas] (according to the Egyptian Customs) being chief Philosopher, to be chief of the Priesthood: and from thence, to be chief in Government, or King. But if this be all their ground, you must excuse my dissent from then, and that for this reason, Because according to the most learned of his followers [Geber, Paracelsus: Henricus Nollus in *Theoria Philosophia Hermeticae, tractatu primo.*], he was called Ter Maximus; for having perfect, and exact Knowledge of all things contained in the World; which things he divided into Three Kingdoms (as he calls them), viz., Mineral, Vegetable, Animal; which Three, he did excel in the right understanding of; also, because he attained to, and transmitted to Posterity (although in an Ænigmatical, and obscure style) the Knowledge of the Quintessence of the whole Universe (which Universe, as I said before, he divided into Three Parts) otherwise called, The great Elixir of the Philosophers; which is the Receptacle of all



Celestial and Terrestrial Virtues; which Secret, many ignorantly deny, many have chargeably sought after, yet few, but some, yea, and the Englishmen have happily found [Ripley, Bacon, Norton, etc.]. The Description of this great Treasure, is said to be found engraved upon a Smaragdine Table, in the Valley of Ebron, after the Flood. So that the Reason before alleged to prove this Author to live after Moses, seem invalid: neither doth it any way appear, that he lived in Moses his time, although it be the opinion of some, as of John Functius, who saith in his Chronology, That he lived Twenty-one years before the Law was given by Moses in the Wilderness; But the Reasons that he, and others give, are far weaker than those that I shall give, for his living before Moses his time. My reasons for that are these: —

First, Because it is received amongst the Ancients, that he was the first that invented the Art of communicating Knowledge to the World, by Writing or Engraving. Now if so, then in all probability he was before Moses; for it is said of Moses that he was from his childhood [Acts vii.22] skilled in all the Egyptian Learning, which could not well have been without the help of Literature, which we never read of any before that invented by Hermes [Chapter x.].

Secondly, he is said by himself, to be the son of Saturn and by others to be the Scribe of Saturn. Now Saturn according to Historians, lived in the time of Sarug, Abraham's great Grand-Father [Sanchoniathon]. I shall but take in Suidas his judgment, and so rest satisfied, that he did not live only before, but long before Moses; His words are these, *Credo Mercurium Trismegistum sapientem Egyptium floruisse ante Pharaonem* [Suidas].

In this Book, though so very old, is contained more true knowledge of God and Nature, than in all the Books in the World besides, except only Sacred Writ; And they that shall judiciously read it, and rightly understand it, may well be excused from reading many Books; the Authors of which, pretend so much to the knowledge of the Creator, and Creation. If God ever appeared in any man, he appeared in him, as it appears by this Book. That a man who had not the benefit of his Ancestors' knowledge, being as I said before, The first inventor of the Art of Communicating Knowledge to Posterity by writing, should be so high a Divine, and so deep a Philosopher, seems to be a thing more of God than of Man; and therefore it was the opinion of some That he came from Heaven, not born upon Earth [Goropius Becanus]. There is contained in this Book, that true Philosophy, without which, it is impossible ever to attain to the height, and exactness of Piety, and

Religion. According to this Philosophy, I call him a Philosopher, that shall learn and study the things that are, and how they are ordered, and governed, and by whom, and for what cause, or to what end; and he that doth so, will acknowledge thanks to, and admire the Omnipotent Creator, Preserver, and Director of all these things. And he that shall be thus truly thankful, may truly be called Pious and Religious: and he that is Religious, shall more and more know where and what the Truth is: And learning that, he shall yet be more and more Religious.

The glory and splendour of Philosophy, is an endeavoring to understand the chief Good, as the Fountain of all Good: Now how can we come near to, or find out the Fountain, but by making use of the Streams as a conduct to it? The operations of Nature, are Streams running from the Fountain of Good, which is God. I am not of the ignorant, and foolish opinion of those that say, The greatest Philosophers are the greatest Atheists: as if to know the works of God, and to understand his goings forth in the Way of Nature, must necessitate a man to deny God. The [Job] Scripture disapproves of this as a sottish tenet, and experience contradicts it: For behold! Here is the greatest Philosopher, and therefore the greatest Divine.

Read understandingly this ensuing Book (and for thy help thou mayest make use of that voluminous Commentary written upon it [Hanbal Offeli Alabar] ) then it will speak more for its Author, than can be spoken by any man, at least by me.

Thine in the love of Truth, J.F.

### **HERMES TRISMEGISTUS, HIS FIRST BOOK**

1. O MY SON, write this First Book, both for Humanity's sake, and for Piety towards god.
2. For there can be no Religion more true or just, than to know the things that are; and to acknowledge thanks for all things, to Him that made them, which thing I shall not cease continually to do.
3. What then should a man do, O Father, to lead his life well; seeing there is nothing here true?

4. Be Pious and Religious, O my Son; for he that doth so, is the best and highest Philosopher, and without Philosophy it is impossible ever to attain to the height and exactness of Piety and Religion.

5. But he that shall learn and study the things that are, and how they are ordered and governed, and by whom, and for what cause, or to what end. Will acknowledge thanks to the *Workman*, as to a good *Father*, an excellent *Nurse*, and a faithful *Steward*, and he that gives thanks shall be Pious or Religious, and he that is Religious shall know both where the truth is, and what it is, and learning that he will be yet more and more Religious.

6. For never, O my Son, shall, or can that soul, which, while it is in the body, lightens and lifts up itself to know and comprehend that which is good and true, slide back to the contrary. For it is infinitely enamoured thereof, and forgetteth all evils; and when it hath learned and known its *Father* and *Progenitor*, it can no more apostatize or depart from that good.

7. And let this, O Son, be the end of Religion and Piety; whereunto thou art once arrived, thou shalt both live well and die blessedly, whilst thy soul is not ignorant wither it must return, and fly back again.

8. For this only, O Son, is the way to *Truth*, which our *Progenitors* travelled in; and by which making their journey, they at length attained to the good. It is a venerable way and plain, but hard and difficult for the soul to go in that is in the body.

9. For first must it war against its own self, and after much strife and dissention, it must be overcome of the part; for the contention is of one against two, whilst it flies away, and they strive to hold and detain it.

10. But the victory of both is not like, for the one hasteth to that which is Good, but the other is a neighbour to the things that are Evil; and that which is Good desireth to be set at liberty, but the things that are Evil love bondage and Slavery.

11. And if the two parts be overcome, they become quiet, and are content to accept of it as their *Ruler*; but if the one be overcome of the two, it is by them led and carried to be punished by its being and continuance here.

12. This is, O Son, the Guide in the way that leads thither; for thou must first forsake the Body before thy end, and get the victory in this contention and strifeful life, and when thou hast overcome, return.

13. But now, O my Son, I will by Heads run through the things that are. Understand thou what I say, and remember what thou hearest.

14. All things that are moved, only that which is not is immoveable.

15. Every body is changeable.

16. Not every body is dissolveable.

17. Some bodies are dissolveable.

18. Every living being is not mortal.

19. Nor every living thing is immortal.

20. That which may be dissolved is also corruptible.

21. That which abides always is unchangeable.

22. That which is unchangeable is eternal.

23. That which is always made is always corrupted.

24. That which is made but once is never corrupted, neither becomes any other thing.

25. Firstly, God; secondly, the World; thirdly, Man.

26. The World for Man; Man for God.

27. Of the Soul; that part which is sensible is mortal, but that part which is reasonable is immortal.

28. Every Essence is immortal.

29. Every Essence is unchangeable.
30. Everything that is, is double.
31. None of the things that are stand still.
32. Not all things are moved by a soul, but everything that is, is moved by a soul.
33. Everything that suffers is sensible; everything that is sensible, suffereth.
34. Everything that is sad, rejoiceth also; and is a mortal living creature.
35. Not everything that joyeth is also sad, but is an eternal living thing.
36. Not every body is sick; every body that is sick is dissolveable.
37. The mind in God.
38. Reasoning (or disputing or discoursing) in Man.
39. Reason in the Mind.
40. The Mind is void of suffering.
41. No thing in a body true.
42. All that is incorporeal, is void of Lying.
43. Everything that is made is corruptible.
44. Nothing good upon Earth; nothing evil in Heaven.
45. God is good; Man is evil.
46. Good is voluntary, or of its own accord.
47. Evil is involuntary, or against its will.

48. The gods choose good things, as good things.
49. Time is a Divine thing.
50. Law is humane.
51. Malice is the nourishment of the World.
52. Time is the corruption of Man.
53. Whatsoever is in Heaven is unalterable.
54. All upon Earth is alterable.
55. Nothing in Heaven is servanted; nothing upon Earth free.
56. Nothing unknown in Heaven; nothing known upon Earth.
57. The things upon Earth communicate not with those in Heaven.
58. All things in Heaven are unblameable; all things upon Earth are subject to reprehension.
59. That which is immortal is not mortal; that which is mortal is not immortal.
60. That which is sown is not always begotten; but that which is begotten always is sown.
61. Of a dissolveable body, there are two times; one for sowing to generation, one from generation to death.
62. Of an everlasting Body, the time is only from the Generation.
63. Dissolveable Bodies are increased and diminished.
64. Dissolveable matter is altered into contraries; to wit, Corruption and Generation, but Eternal matter into itself, and its like.

65. The Generation of Man is corruption; the Corruption of Man is the beginning of Generation.

66. That which offsprings or begetteth another, is itself an offspring or begotten by another.

67. Of things that are, some are in bodies, some in their IDEAS.

68. Whasoever things belong to operation or working, are in a body.

69. That which is immortal, partakes not of that which is mortal.

70. That which is mortal cometh not into a Body immortal; but that which is immortal cometh into that which is mortal.

71. Operation or Workings are not carried upwards, but descend downwards.

72. Things upon Earth, do nothing advantage those in Heaven; but all things in Heaven do profit and advantage all things upon Earth.

73. Heaven is capable, and a fit receptacle of everlasting Bodies; the Earth of corruptible Bodies.

74. The Earth is brutish; the Heaven is reasonable or rational.

75. Those things that are in Heaven are subjected or placed under it, but the things on earth are placed upon it.

76. Heaven is the first element.

77. Providence is Divine order.

78. Necessity is the Minister or Servant of Providence.

79. Fortune is the carriage or effect of that which is without order; the Idol of operation, a lying Fantasie or opinion.

80. What is God? The immutable or unalterable good.

81. What is man? An unchangeable evil.

82. If thou perfectly remember these Heads, thou canst not forget those things which in more words I have largely expounded unto thee; for these are the contents or Abridgment of them.

83. Avoid all conversation with the multitude or common people; for I would not have thee subject to Envy, much less to be ridiculous unto the many.

84. For the like always takes to itself that which is like, but the unlike never agrees with the unlike. Such discourses as these have very few Auditors, and peradventure very few will have, but they have something peculiar unto themselves.

85. They do rather sharpen and whet evil men to their maliciousness; therefore, it behoveth to avoid the multitude, and take heed of them as not understanding the virtue and power of the things that are said.

86. *How does thou mean, O Father?*

87. This O Son: the whole nature and Composition of those living things called Men, is very prone to Maliciousness, and is very familiar, and as it were nourished with it, and therefore is delighted with it; now this wight, if it shall come to learn or know that the world was once made, and all things are done according to Providence or Necessity, Destiny or Fate, bearing rule over all, will he not be much worse than himself, despising the whole, because it was made? *And if he may lay the cause of Evil upon Fate or Destiny, he will never abstain from any evil work.*

88. *Wherefore we must look warily to such kind of people, that being in ignorance they may be less evil for fear of that which is hidden and kept secret.*

The End of THE FIRST BOOK OF HERMES....

## THE SECOND BOOK, CALLED, POEMANDER

MY THOUGHTS being once seriously busied about things that are, and my Understanding lifted up, all my bodily Senses being exceedingly holden back, as it is with them that are heavy of sleep, by reason either of fulness of meat, or of bodily labour: Methought I saw one of an



exceeding great stature, and of an infinite greatness, call me by my name, and say unto me, *What wouldst thou hear and see?* Or what wouldst thou understand to learn and know?

2. Then said I, *Who are Thou?* I am, quoth he, *Poemander*, the mind of the great Lord, the most mighty and absolute *Emperor*: I know what thou wouldst have, and I am always present with thee.

3. Then I said, *I would learn the things that are, and understand the nature of them, and know God.* How? said he. I answered that I would gladly hear. Then said he, Have me again in thy mind, and whatsoever thou wouldst learn, I will teach thee.

4. When he had thus said, he was changed in his *Idea* or *Form*, and straightway, in the twinkling of an eye, all things were opened unto me. And I saw an infinite sight, all things were become light, both sweet and exceeding pleasant; and I was wonderfully delighted in the beholding it.

5. But after a little while, there was a darkness made in part, coming down obliquely, fearful and hideous, which seemed unto me to be changed *into a certain moist nature*, unspeakably troubled, which yielded a smoke as from Fire; and from whence proceeded a voice unutterable, and very mournful, but inarticulate, inasmuch as it seemed to have come from the Light.

6. Then from that Light, a certain *holy Word* joined itself unto Nature, and outflowed the pure and unmixed Fire from the moist nature upwards on high; it was exceeding *Light*, and *sharp*, and *operative* withal. And the *Air*, which was also light, followed the *Spirit* and mourned up to Fire (from the Earth and the Water), insomuch that it seemed to hang and depend upon it.

7. And the Earth and the Water stayed by themselves so mingled together, that the Earth could not be seen for the Water, but they were moved because of the *Spiritual word* that was carried upon them.

8. Then said *Poemander* unto me, Dost thou understand this *vision*, and what it meaneth? I shall know, said I. Then said he, *I am that Light, the Mind, thy God, who am before that moist nature that appeared out of darkness; and that bright and lightful Word from the mind is the Son of God.*

9. How is that, quoth I? Thus, replied he, understand it: That which in thee seeth and heareth, the Word of the Lord, and the Mind the Father, God, differ not one from the other; and the union of these is Life.  
*Trismeg.*--I thank thee.  
*Pimand.*--But first conceive well the Light in thy mind, and know it.

10. When he had said thus, for a long time we looked steadfastly one upon the other, insomuch that I trembled at his *Idea* or *Form*.

11. But when he nodded to me, I beheld in my mind the Light that is in innumerable, and the truly indefinite *ornament* or *world*; and that the *Fire* is comprehended or contained in, or by a great moist Power, and constrained to keep its station.

12. These things I understood, seeing the word, or *Pimander*; and when I was mightily amazed, he said again unto me, Hast thou seen in thy mind that Archetypal Form which was before the interminated and infinite Beginning? Thus *Pimander* to me. But whence, quoth I, or whereof are the Elements of Nature made?

*Pimander.*--Of the Will and counsel of God; which taking the Word, and beholding the beautiful World (in the Archetype thereof) imitated it, and so made this World, by the principles and vital seeds or Soul-like productions of itself.

13. For the *Mind* being God, *Male and Female, Life and Light*, brought forth by his *Word* another *Mind* or *Workman*; which being God of the *Fire*, and the *Spirit*, fashioned and formed seven other Governors, which in their circles contain the *Sensible World*, whose Government or disposition is called *Fate* or *Destiny*.

14. *Straightway* leaped out, or exalted itself from the downward Elements of God, *The Word of God*, into the clean and pure Workmanship of Nature, and was united to the *Workman, Mind*, for it was *Consubstantial*; and so the downward born elements of Nature were left without Reason, that they might be the only Matter.

15. But the *Workman, Mind*, together with the *Word*, containing the circles, and whirling them about, turned round as a wheel, his own Workmanships; and suffered them to be turned from an indefinite Beginning to an indeterminable end, for they always begin where they end.

16. And the *Circulation* or running round of these, as the mind willeth, out of the lower or downward-born Elements, brought forth unreasonable or brutish Creatures, for they had no reason, the Air flying things, and the Water such as swim.

17. And the Earth and the Water were separated, either from the other, as the *Mind* would; and the Earth brought forth from herself, such living creatures as she had, four-footed and creeping beasts, wild and tame.

18. But the Father of all things, the *Mind* being *Life* and *Light*, brought forth *Man* like unto himself, whom he loved s his proper *Birth*; for he was all beauteous, having the image of his *Father*.

19. For indeed God was exceedingly enamoured of his own form or shape, and delivered unto it all his own Workmanships. But he, seeing and understanding the *Creation* of the Workman in the whole, would needs also himself *fall to work*, and so was separated from the Father, being in the sphere of Generation or Operation.

20. Having all Power, he considered the Operations or Workmanships of the *Seven*; but they loved him, and everyone made him partaker of his own order.

21. And he learning diligently, and understanding their Essence, and partaking their Nature, resolved to pierce and break through the *Circumference* of the Circles, and to understand the power of him that sits upon the Fire.

22. And having already all power of mortal things, of the Living, and of the unreasonable creatures of the World, stooped down and peeped through the *Harmony*, and breaking through the strength of the Circles, so showed and made manifest the downward-born Nature, the fair and beautiful Shape or Form of God.

23. Which, when he saw, having in itself the unsatiable Beauty, and all the operations of the *Seven Governors*, and the Form or Shape of God, he *smiled* for love, as if he had seen the shape or likeness in the Water, or the shadow upon the Earth, of the fairest Human form.

24. And seeing in the Water a Shape, a Shape like unto himself, in himself he loved it, and would cohabit with it, and immediately upon

the resolution ensued the operation, and brought forth the unreasonable Image or Shape.

25. Nature presently laying hold of what it so much loved, did wholly wrap herself about it, and they were mingled, for they loved one another.

26. And from this cause *Man* above all things that live upon earth is double: *Mortal*, because of his body, and *Immortal*, because of the substantial Man. For being immortal, and having power of all things, he yet suffers mortal things, and such as are subject to Fate or Destiny.

27. And therefore being above all *Harmony*, he is made and become a servant to *Harmony*, he is *Hermaphrodite*, or Male and Female, and watchful, he is governed by and subjected to a Father, that is both Male and Female, and watchful.

28. After these things, I said, *Thou art my mind, and I am in love with Reason.*

29. Then said *Pimander*, This is the *Mystery* that to this day is hidden and kept secret; for Nature being mingled with man, brought forth a Wonder most Wonderful; for he having the nature of the *Harmony* of the *Seven*, from him whom I told thee, the Fire and the Spirit, Nature continued not, but forthwith brought forth seven Men, all *Males* and *Females*, and sublime, or on high, according to the Natures of the seven Governors.

30. And after these things, O *Pimander*, quoth I, I am now come into a great desire and longing to hear; do not digress or run out.

31. But he said, Keep silence, for I have not yet finished the first speech.

32. *Trism.* Behold, I am silent.

33. *Pim.* The Generation therefore of these Seven was after this manner:-The *Air* being *Feminine* and the Water desirous of Copulation, took from the Fire its ripeness, and from the aether Spirit, and so Nature produced Bodies after the species and shape of men.

34. And man was made of *Life* and *Light*, into *Soul* and *Mind*; of *Life* the soul, of *Light* the *Mind*.

35. And so all the members of the *Sensible World*, continued unto the period of the end, bearing rule and generating.

36. Hear now the rest of that speech thou so much desireth to hear.

37. When that *period* was fulfilled, the bond of all things was loosed and untied by the will of God; for all living *Creatures* being Hermaphroditical, or *Male* and *Female*, were loosed and untied together with man; and so the Males were apart by themselves and the Females likewise.

38. And straightways God said to the Holy Word, *Increase in increasing and multiplying in multitude all you my Creatures and Workmanships. And let him that is endued with mind, know himself to be immortal; and that the cause of death is the love of the body, and let him learn all things that are.*

39. When he had thus said, *Providence by Fate of Harmony*, made the mixtures and established the Generations, and all things were multiplied according to their kind. And he that knew himself, came at length to the *Superstantial* of every way substantial good.

40. But he that thro' the error of Love loved the *Body*, abideth wandering in darkness, sensible, suffering the things of death.

41. *Trism.* But why do they that are ignorant, sin so much, that they should therefore be deprived of immortality?

42. *Pim.* Thou seemest not to have understood what thou hast heard.

43. *Trism.* Peradventure I seem so to thee; but I both understand and remember them.

44. *Pim.* I am glad for thy sake if thou understoodest them.

45. *Trism.* Tell me why are they worthy of death, that are in death?

46. *Pim.* Because there goeth a sad and dismal darkness before its body; of which darkness is the moist nature, of which moist nature the Body consisteth in the sensible world, from whence death is derived. Has thou understood this aright?

47. *Trism.* But why, or how doth he that understands himself, go or pass into God?

48. *Pim.* That which the Word of God said, say I: Because the Father of all things consists of Life and Light, whereof man is made.

49. *Trism.* Thou sayest very well.

50. *Pim.* God and the Father is Light and Life, of which Man is made. If therefore thou learn and believe thyself to be of the Life and Light, thou shalt again pass into Life.

51. *Trism.* But yet tell me more, O my Mind, how I shall go into Life.

52. *Pim.* God saith, Let man, endued with a mind, mark, consider, and know himself well.

53. *Trism.* Have not all men a mind?

54. *Pim.* Take heed what thou sayest, for I the mind come unto men that are holy and good, pure and merciful, and that live piously and religiously; and my presence is a help unto them. And forthwith they know all things, and lovingly they supplicate and propitiate the Father; and blessing him, they give him thanks, and sing hymns unto him, being ordered and directed by filial Affection and natural Love. And before they give up their bodies to the death of them, they hate their senses, knowing their Works and Operations.

55. Rather I that am the Mind itself, will not suffer the operations or Works, which happen or belong to the body, to be finished and brought to perfection in them; but being the *Porter* or *Doorkeeper*, I will shut up the entrances of Evil, and cut off the thoughtful desires of filthy works.

56. But to the foolish, and evil, and wicked, and envious, and covetous, and murderous, and profane, I am far off, giving place to the revenging *Demon*, which applying unto him the sharpness of fire, tormenteth such

a man sensible, and armeth him the more to all wickedness, that he may obtain the greater punishment.

57. And such an one never ceaseth, having unfulfilled desires, and unsatisfiable concupiscences, and always fighting in darkness; for the *Demon* always afflicts and tormenteth him continually, and increaseth the fire upon him more and more.

58. *Trism.* Thou hast, O Mind, most excellently taught me all things, as I desired; but tell me, moreover, after the return is made, what then?

59. *Pim.* First of all, in the resolution of the material body, the Body itself is given up to alteration, and the form which it had becometh invisible; and the idle manners are permitted, and left to the *Demon*, and the senses of the body return into their Fountains, being parts, and again made up into Operations.

60. And Anger, and concupiscence, go into the brutish or unreasonable nature; and the rest striveth upward by Harmony.

61. And to the first *Zone* it giveth the power it had of increasing and diminishing.

62. To the second, the machinations or plotting of evils, and one effectual deceit or craft.

63. To the third, the idle deceit of Concupiscence.

64. To the fourth, the desire of Rule, and unsatiable Ambition.

65. To the fifth, profane Boldness, and the headlong rashness of confidence.

66. To the sixth, Evil and ineffectual occasions of Riches.

67. To the seventh *Zone*, subtle Falsehood, always lying in wait.

68. And then being made naked of all the Operations of *Harmony*, it cometh to the Eighth Nature, having its proper power, and singeth praises to the father with the things that are, and all they that are

present rejoice, and congratulate the coming of it; and being made like to them with whom it converseth, it heareth also the Powers that are above the Eighth Nature, singing Praise to God in a certain voice that is peculiar to them.

69. And then in order they return unto the Father, and themselves deliver themselves to the Powers, and becoming Powers they are in God.

70. This is the Good, and to them that know, to be desired.

71. Furthermore, why sayest thou, What resteth, but that understanding all men thou become a guide, and way-leader to them that are worthy; that the kind of *Humanity*, or *Mankind*, may be saved by God?

72. When *Pimander* had thus said unto me, he was mingled among the Powers.

73. But I, giving thanks, and blessing the father of all things, rose up, being enabled by him, and taught the Nature of the Nature of the whole, and having seen the greatest sight or spectacle.

74. And I began to Preach unto men, the beauty and fairness of Piety and Knowledge.

75. *O ye people, men, born and made of the earth, which have given yourselves over to drunkenness and sleep, and to the ignorance of God, be sober and cease your surfeit, whereunto you are allured and visited by brutish and unreasonable sleep.*

76. And they that heard me come willingly and with one accord; and then I said further:

77. *Why, O Men of the Offspring of Earth, why have you delivered yourselves over unto Death, having power to partake of Immortality? Repent and change your minds, you that have together walked in Error, and have been darkened in ignorance.*

78. Depart from that dark light, be partakers of Immortality, and leave or forsake corruption.



79. And some of *them that heard me*, mocking and scorning went away, and delivered themselves up to the way of Death.

80. But others casting themselves down before my feet, besought me that they might be taught; but I, causing them to rise up, became a guide of mankind, teaching them the reasons how, and by what means they may be saved. And I sowed in them the Words of Wisdom, and nourished them with *Ambrosian Water of Immortality*.

81. And when it was evening and the brightness of the same began wholly to go down, I commanded them to go down, I commanded them to give thanks to God; and when they had finished their thanksgiving, everyone returned to his own lodging.

82. But I wrote in myself the bounty and benevolence of *Pimander*; and being filled with what I most desired, I was exceedingly glad.

83. For the sleep of the body was the sober watchfulness of the mind; and the shutting of my eyes the true sight, and my silence great with child and full of good; and the pronouncing of my words the blossoms and fruits of good things.

84. And thus it came to pass or happened unto me, which I received from my mind, that is *Pimander*, the Lord of the Word; whereby I became inspired by God with the Truth.

85. For which cause, with my soul and whole strength, I give praise and blessing unto God the Father.

86. *Holy is God, the Father of all things.*

87. *Holy is God, whose will is performed and accomplished by his own powers.*

88. *Holy is God, that determineth to be known, and is known by his own, or those that are his.*

89. *Holy art thou, that by thy Word has established all things.*

90. *Holy art thou, of whom all Nature is the Image.*

91. *Holy art thou, whom Nature hath not formed.*
92. *Holy art thou, that art stronger than all power.*
93. *Holy art thou, that art stronger than all excellency.*
94. *Holy art thou, that art better than all praise.*
95. *Accept these reasonable sacrifices from a pure soul, and a heart that stretched out unto thee.*
96. *O unspeakable, unutterable, to be praised with silence!*
97. *I beseech thee, that I may never err from the knowledge of thee; look mercifully upon me, and enable me, and enlighten with this Grace those that are in Ignorance, the brothers of my kind, but thy Sons.*
98. *Therefore I believe thee, and bear witness, and go into the Life and Light.*
99. *Blessed art thou, O Father; thy man would be sanctified with thee, as thou hast given him all power.*

The End of The Second Book, Called, POEMANDER....

### **THE THIRD BOOK, THE HOLY SERMON**

THE glory of all things, God, and that which is Divine, and the Divine Nature, the beginning of things that are.

2. God, and the Mind, and Nature, and Matter, and Operation or Working, and Necessity, and Matter, and Operation or Working, and Necessity, and the End, and Renovation.
3. For there were in the *Chaos* an infinite darkness in the Abyss or bottomless Depth, and Water, and a subtle in Spirit intelligible in Power; and there went out the Holy Light, and the Elements were coagulated from the Sand out of the moist substance.
4. And all the Gods distinguished the Nature full of Seeds.

5. And when all things were interminated and unmade up, the light things were divided on high. And the heavy things were founded upon the moist Sand, all things being Terminated or Divided by Fire, and being sustained or hung up by the Spirit, they were so carried, and the Heaven was seen in *Seven Circles*.

6. And the Gods were seen in their *Ideas* of the Stars, with all their signs, and the Stars were numbered with the Gods in them. And the Sphere was all lined with *Air*, carried about in a circular motion by the Spirit of God.

7. And every God, by his internal power, did that which was commanded him; and there were made four-footed things, and creeping things, and such as live in the water, and such as fly, and every fruitful seed, and Grass, and the Flowers of all Greens, all which had sowed in themselves the Seeds of Regeneration.

8. As also the Generations of Men, to the Knowledge of the Divine Works, and a lively or working Testimony of Nature, and a multitude of men, and the dominion of all things under Heaven, and the Knowledge of good things, and to be increased in increasing, and multiplied in multitude.

9. And every Soul in Flesh, by the wonderful working of the Gods in the Circles, to the beholding of Heaven, the Gods Divine Works, and the operations of Nature; and for signs of good things, and the Knowledge of the Divine Power, and to find out every cunning Workmanship of good things.

10. So it beginneth to live in them, and to be wise according to the operation of the course of the circular Gods; and to be resolved into that which shall be great Monuments and Rememberances of the cunning Works done upon earth, leaving them to be read by the darkness of times.

11. And every Generation of living Flesh, of Fruit, Seed, and all Handicrafts, though they be lost, must of necessity be renewed by the renovation of the Gods, and of the Nature of a Circle, moving in number; for it is a Divine thing that every worldly temperature should be renewed by Nature; for in that which is Divine is Nature also established.

The End of the Fragments of the Third Book, THE HOLY SERMON....

#### THE FOURTH BOOK, CALLED THE KEY

YESTERDAY'S Speech, O *Asclepius*, I dedicated to thee; this day it is fit to dedicate to Tat, because it is an Epitome of those general Speeches which were spoken to him.

2. God therefore, and the Father, and the Good, O *Tat*, have the same Nature, or rather also the same Act and operation.

3. For there is one name or appellation of Nature or Increase, which concerneth things changeable, and another about things unchangeable, and about things unmoveable, that is to say, Things Divine and Humane; every one of that which himself will have so to be; but action or operation is of another thing, or elsewhere, as we have taught in other things, Divine and Humane, which must here also be understood.

4. *For his Operation or Act is his will, and his Essence, to will all things to be.*

5. For what is God, and the Father, and the Good, but the Being of all things that yet are not, and the existence itself of those things that are?

6. This is God, this is the Father, this is the Good, whereunto no other thing is present or approacheth.

7. For the *World*, and the *Sun*, which is also a *Father* by *Participation*, is not for all that equally the cause of Good, and of Life, to living creatures. And if this be so, he is altogether constrained by the Will of the Good, without which it is not possible either to be, or to be begotten or made.

8. But the Father is the cause of his Children, who hath a will both to sow and nourish that which is good by the Sun.

9. For Good is always active or busy in making; and this cannot be in any other but in him that taketh nothing, and yet willeth all things to be; for I will not say, O *Tat*, making them; for he that maketh is defective in much time, in which sometimes he maketh not, as also of quantity and quality; for sometimes he maketh those things that have quantity and quality, and sometimes the contrary.

10. But God is the Father, and the Good, in being all things; for he both will be this and is it, and yet all this for himself (as is true) in him that can see it.

11. For all things else are for this, it is the property of Good, to be known. This is the Good, O *Tat*.

12. *Tat*. Thou hast filled us, O *Father*, with a sight both good and fair, and the eye of my mind is almost become more holy by the sight or Spectacle.

13. *Trism*. I wonder not at it, for the *sight of Good* is not like the beam of the *Sun*, which being of a fiery shining brightness, maketh the eye blind by his excessive Light, that gazeth upon it; rather the contrary, for it enlighteneth, and so much increaseth the light of the eye, as any man is able to receive the influence of this intelligible clearness.

14. For it is more swift and sharp to pierce, and innocent or harmless withal, and full of immortality; and they are capable, and can draw any store of this spectacle and sight, do many times fall asleep from the Body, into this most fair and beauteous Vision; which thing *Celius* and Saturn our Progenitors obtained unto.

15. *Tat*. I would we also, O Father, could do so.

16. *Trism*. I would we could, O Son; but for the present we are less intent to the Vision, and cannot yet open the eyes of our mind to behold the incorruptible and incomprehensible Beauty of that Good; but then we shall see it, when we have nothing at all to say of it.

17. For the knowledge of it is a Divine Silence, and the rest of all the senses; for neither can he that understands that, understand anything else, nor he that sees that, see anything else, nor hear any other thing, nor in sum move the Body.

18. For shining steadfastly upon and round the whole mind, it enlighteneth all the Soul; and loosing it from the Bodily senses and motions, it draweth it from the Body, and changeth it wholly into the Essence of God.

19. *For it is possible for the Soul, O Son, to be deified while yet it lodgeth in the Body of Man, if it contemplate the beauty of the Good.*

20. *Tat.* How does thou mean deifying, *Father*?

21. *Trism.* There are differences, O Son, of every Soul.

22. *Tat.* But how dost thou again divide the changes?

23. *Trism.* Hast thou not heard in the general Speeches, that from one Soul of the universe are all those Souls which in the world are tossed up and down, as it were, and severally divided? Of these Souls there are many changes, some into a more fortunate estate, and some quite the contrary; for they which are of creeping things are changed into those of watery things; and those of things living in the water, to those of things living upon the Land; and Airy ones are changed into men, and human Souls, that lay hold of immortality, are changed into *Demons*.

24. And so they go on into the Sphere or Region of the fixed Gods; for there are two choirs or companies of Gods, one of them that wander, and another of them that are fixed; And so this is the perfect glory of the Soul.

25. But the Soul entering into the body of a Man, if it continue evil, shall neither taste of immortality, nor is partaker of the Good.

26. But being drawn back the same way, it returneth into creeping things; And this is the condemnation of an Evil Soul.

27. And the wickedness of a Soul is ignorance; for the Soul that knows nothing of the things that are, neither the Nature of them, nor that which is good, but is blinded, rusheth and dasheth against the bodily passions; and unhappy as it is, and not knowing itself, it serveth strange bodies and evil ones, carrying the Body as a burden, and not ruling but ruled: And this is the mischief of the Soul.

28. On the contrary, the virtue of the soul is Knowledge; for he that knows is both good and religious, and already Divine.

29. *Tat.* But who is such a one, O Father?

30. *Trism.* He that neither speaks nor hears many things; for he, O Son, that heareth two speeches, or hearings, fighteth in the shadow.

31. For God, and the Father, and Good, is neither spoken nor heard.

32. This being so in all things that are, are the *Senses*, because they cannot be without them.

33. But Knowledge differs much from Sense; for Sense is of things that surmount it, but Knowledge is the end of Sense.

34. Knowledge is the gift of God; for all Knowledge is unbodily, but useth the Mind as an instrument, as the Mind useth the Body.

35. Therefore, both intelligible and material things, go both of them into bodies; for, of contraposition, *that is, setting one against another, and contrariety, all things must consist.* And it is impossible it should be otherwise.

36. *Tat.* Who, therefore, is this Material God?

37. *Trism.* The fair and beautiful World, and yet it is not good; for it is material, and easily passible, nay, it is the first of all passible things; and the second of the things that are, and needy or wanting somewhat else. And it was once made, and is always, and is ever in generation, and made, and continually makes, or generates things that have quantity and quality.

38. For it is moveable, and every material motion is generation; but the intellectual stability moves the material motion after this manner.

39. Because the World is a Sphere, that is, a head, and above the head there is nothing material, as beneath the feet there is nothing intellectual.

40. The whole Universe is material: The Mind is the head, and it is moved spherically, that is, like a head.

41. Whatsoever, therefore, is joined or united to the Membrane or Film of the head, wherein the Soul is, is immortal, and as in the Soul of a made

Body, hath its Soul full of the Body; but those that are further from that Membrane, have the Body full of Soul.

42. The whole is a living wight, and therefore consisteth of material and intellectual.

43. And the World is the first and Man the second living wight after the World, but the first of things that are mortal; and therefore hath whatsoever benefit of the Soul all the other have: And yet for all this, he is not only not good, but flatly evil, as being mortal.

44. For the World is not good, as it is moveable; nor evil, as it is immortal.

45. But man is evil, both as he is moveable, and as he is mortal.

46. But the Soul of Man is carried in this manner, *The Mind is in Reason, Reason in the Soul, The Soul in the Spirit, The Spirit in the Body.*

47. The Spirit being diffused and going through the veins, and arteries, and blood, both moveth the living creature, and after a certain manner beareth it.

48. Wherefore some also have thought the Soul to be blood, being deceived in Nature, not knowing that first the spirit must return into the Soul, and then the blood is congealed, and the veins and arteries emptied, and then the living thing dieth: And this is the death of the Body.

49. All things depend of one beginning, and the beginning depends of that which is one and alone.

50. And the beginning is moved, that it may again be a beginning; but that which is one, standeth and abideth, and is not moved.

51. There are therefore, these three, *God the Father, and the Good, the World, and Man.* God hath the World, and the World hath Man; and the World is the Son of God, and Man as it were the offspring of the World.

52. For God is not ignorant of Man, but knows him perfectly, and will be known by him. This only is healthful to man, the knowledge of God:



This is the return of *Olympus*; by this only the soul is made good, and not sometimes good, and sometimes evil, but of necessity Good.

53. *Tat.* What meaneth thou, O Father?

54. *Trism.* Consider, O Son, the Soul of a Child, when as yet it hath as yet received no dissolution of its body, which is not yet grown, but is very small: how then if it look upon itself, it sees itself beautiful, as not having been as yet spotted with the Passions of the Body, but as it were depending yet upon the soul of the World.

55. But when the Body is grown, and distracteth the Soul, it engenders forgetfulness, and partakes no more of the *Fair and the Good*, and Forgetfulness is evilness.

56. The like also happeneth to them that go out of the Body: For when the soul runs back into itself, the Spirit is contracted into the blood, and the Soul into the Spirit. But the Mind being made pure, and free from these clothings; and being Divine by Nature, taking a fiery body, rangeth abroad in every place, leaving the soul to judgment, and to the punishment it hath deserved.

57. *Tat.* Why dost thou say so, O Father, that the Mind is separated from the Soul, and the Soul from the Spirit? When even now thou saidst that the Soul was the clothing or apparel of the Mind, and the Body of the Soul.

58. *Trism.* O Son, he that hears must co-understand, and conspire in thought with him that speaks; yea, he must have his hearing swifter and sharper than the voice of the speaker.

59. The disposition of these clothings or Covers is done in an Earthly Body; for it is impossible that the Mind should establish or rest itself, naked, and of itself in an Earthly Body; neither is the Earthly Body able to bear such immortality: and therefore, that it might suffer so great virtue, the Mind compacted, as it were, and took to itself the passable Body of the Soul, as a covering or clothing. And the Soul being also in some sort Divine, useth the Spirit as her Minister or Servant; and the Spirit governeth the living things.

60. When therefore the Mind is separated, and departeth from the Earthly Body, presently it puts on its Fiery Coat, which it could not do, having to dwell in an Earthly Body.

61. For the Earth cannot suffer fire, for it is all burned of a small spark; therefore is the water poured round about the Earth, as a wall or defence, to withstand the flame of fire.

62. But the Mind being the most sharp or swift of all the Divine Cogitations, and more swift than all the Elements, hath the fire for its Body.

63. For the Mind, which is the Workman of all, useth the fire as his Instrument in his Workmanship; and he that is the Workman of all useth it to the making of all things, as it is used by Man to the making of Earthly things only, for the Mind that is upon Earth, void or naked of fire, cannot do the business of men, nor that which is otherwise the affairs of God.

64. But the Soul of Man, and yet not everyone, but that which is pious and religious, is Angelic and Divine. And such a soul, after it is departed from the body, having striven the strife of Piety, becomes either Mind or God.

65. And the strife of piety is to know God, and to injure no Man; and this way it becomes Mind.

66. But the impious Soul abideth in its own offence, punished of itself, and seeking an earthly and humane body to enter into.

67. For no other Body is capable of a Humane Soul, neither is it lawful for a Man's Soul to fall into the Body of an unreasonable living thing: For it is the Law or Decree of God to preserve a Human Soul from so great a contumely and reproach.

68. *Tat.* How then is the Soul of Man punished, O Father, and what is its greatest torment?

69. *Herm.* Impiety, O my Son; for what Fire hath so great a flame as it? Or what biting Beast doth so tear the Body as it doth the Soul?

70. Or dost thou not see how many Evils the wicked Soul suffereth, roaring and crying out, *I am burned, I am consumed, I know not what to say or do, I am devoured, unhappy wretch, of the evils that compass and lay hold upon me; miserable that I am, I neither hear nor see anything.*

71. These are the voices of a punished and tormented Soul, and not as many; and thou, O Son, thinkest that the Soul going out of the Body grows brutish or enters into a Beast; which is a very great error, for the Soul punished after this manner.

72. For the Mind, when it is ordered or appointed to get a Fiery Body for the services of God, coming down into the wicked soul, torments it with the whips of Sins, wherewith the wicked Soul, being scorched, turns itself to Murders and Contumelies, and Blasphemies, and divers violences, and other things by which men are injured.

73. But into a pious soul, the mind entering, leads it into the Light of Knowledge.

74. And such a Soul is never satisfied with singing praise *to God*, and speaking well of all men; and both in words and deeds always doing good, in imitation of her Father.

75. Therefore, O Son, we must give thanks and pray that we may obtain a good mind.

76. The Soul therefore may be altered or changed into the better, but into the worse it is impossible.

77. But there is a communion of souls, and those of Gods, communicate with those men, and those of Men with those of Beasts.

78. And the better always take of the worse, Gods of Men; Men of brute Beasts, but God of all: For He is the best of all, and all things are less than He.

79. Therefore is the World subject unto God, Man unto the World, and unreasonable things to Man.

80. But God is above all and about all; and the beams of God are operations; and the beams of the World are Natures; and the beams of Man are *Arts and Sciences*.

81. And operations do act by the World, and upon Man by the natural beams of the World, but Natures work by the Elements, and Man by *Arts and Sciences*.

82. And this is the Government of the whole, depending upon the Nature of the *One*, and piercing or coming down by the *one Mind*, than which nothing is more Divine and more efficacious or operative; and nothing more uniting, or nothing is more *One*. The Communion of Gods to Men, and of Men to Gods.

83. This is the *Bonas Genius*, or good *Demon*: blessed soul that is fullest of it! And unhappy soul that is empty of it.

84. *Tat*. And wherefore, Father?

85. *Trism*. Know, Son, that every Soul hath the *Good Mind*; for of that it is we now speak, and not of that Minister of whom we said before, that he was sent from the Judgment.

86. For the Soul without the Mind can neither say nor do anything; for many times the Mind flies away from the Soul, and in that hour the Soul neither seeth nor heareth, but is like an unreasonable thing; so great is the power of the Mind.

87. But neither brooketh it an idle or lazy Soul, but leaves such an one fastened to the Body, and by it is pressed down.

88. And such a Soul, O Son, hath no Mind; wherefore neither must such a one be called a Man.

89. For Man is a Divine living thing, and is not to be compared to any brute Beast that lives upon Earth, but to them that are above in Heaven, that are called Gods.

90. Rather, if we shall be bold to speak the truth, he that is a Man indeed is above them, or at least they are equal in power, one to the other. For

none of the things in Heaven will come down upon Earth, and leave the limits of Heaven, but a Man ascends up into Heaven, and measures it.

91. And he knoweth what things are on high, and what below, and learneth all other things exactly.

92. And that which is the greatest of all, he leaveth not the Earth, and yet is above: So great is the greatness of his Nature.

93. Wherefore we must be bold to say, *That an Earthly Man is a mortal God, and that the Heavenly God is an immortal Man.*

94. Wherefore, by these two are all things governed, the World and Man; but they and all things else of that which is *One*.

THE END OF THE FOURTH BOOK, Called THE KEY....

## THE FIFTH BOOK, THAT GOD IS NOT MANIFEST, AND YET MOST MANIFEST

THIS Discourse, I will also make to thee, *O Tat*, that thou mayest not be ignorant of the more excellent name of God.

2. But do thou contemplate in thy Mind how that which to many seems hidden and unmanifest may be most manifest to thee.

3. For it were not all, if it were apparent, for whatsoever is apparent is generated or made; for it was made manifest, but that which is not manifest is ever.

4. For it needeth not be manifested, for it is always.

5. And he maketh all other things manifest, being unmanifest, as being always, and making other things manifest, he is not made manifest.

6. Himself is not made, yet in fantasie he fantasieth all things, or in appearance he maketh them appear; for appearance is only of those things that are generated or made, for appearance is nothing but generation.

7. But he that is *One*, that is not made nor generated, is also unapparent and unmanifest.

8. But making all things appear, he appeareth in all, and by all; but especially he is manifested to or in those things wherein himself listeth.

9. Thou, therefore, *O Tat*, my Son, pray first to the *Lord and Father*, and to the *Alone*, and to the *One*, from whom is one to be merciful to thee, that thou mayest know and understand so great a God; and that he would shine one of his beams upon thee in thy understanding.

10. For only the Understanding see that which is not manifest, or apparent, as being itself not manifest or apparent; and if thou canst, *O Tat*, it will appear to the eyes of thy Mind.

11. For the Lord, void of envy, appeareth through the whole world. Thou mayest see the intelligence, and take it into thy hands, and contemplate the image of God.

12. But if that which is in thee, be not known or apparent unto thee, how shall he in thee be seen, and appear unto thee by the eyes?

13. But if thou wilt see him, consider and understand the *Sun*, consider the course of the *Moon*, consider the order of the *Stars*.

14. Who is he that keepeth order? For all order is circumscribed or terminated in number and place.

15. The Sun is the greatest of the Gods in Heaven, to whom all the Heavenly Gods give place, as to a King and Potentate; and yet he being such an one, greater than the Earth or the Sea, is content to suffer infinite lesser stars to walk and move above himself: whom doth he fear the while, O Son?

16. Every one of these Stars that are in Heaven do not make the like, or an equal course; who is it that hath prescribed unto every one the manner and the greatness of their course?

17. This Bear that turns round about its own self, and carries round the whole World with her, who possessed and made such an Instrument?

18. Who hath set the bounds to the Sea? Who hath established the Earth? For there is somebody, *O Tat*, that is the Maker and Lord of these things.

19. For it is impossible, O Son, that either place, or number, or measure, should be observed without a maker.

20. For no order can be made by disorder or disproportion.

21. I would it were possible for thee, O my Son, to have wings, and to fly into the Air, and being taken up in the midst, between Heaven and Earth, to see the stability of the Earth, the fluidness of the Sea, the courses of the Rivers, the largeness of the Air, the sharpness and swiftness of the Fire, the motion of the Stars, and the speediness of the Heaven, by which it goeth round about all these.

22. O Son, what a happy sight it were, at one instant, to see all these; that which is immoveable moved, and that which is hidden appear and be manifest!

23. And if thou wilt see and behold this Workman, even by mortal things that are upon earth, and in the deep, consider, O Son, how Man is made and framed in the Womb; and examine diligently the skill and cunning of the Workman, and learn who it was that wrought and fashioned the beautiful and Divine shape of *Man*; who circumscribed and marked out his eyes? who bored his nostrils and ears? who opened his mouth? who stretched out and tie together his sinews? who channelled the veins? who hardened and made strong the bones? who clothed the flesh with skin? who divided the fingers and joints? who flatted and made broad the soles of the feet? who digged the pores? who stretched out the spleen? who made the Heart like a *Pyramis*? who made the Liver broad? who made the Lights spungy, and full of holes? who made the belly large and capacious? who set to outward view the more honorable parts, and hid the filthy ones?

24. See how many arts in one Matter, and how many Works in one Superscription, and all exceedingly beautiful and all done in measure, and yet all differing.

25. Who hath made all these things? What Mother? What Father? Save only god that is not manifest; that made all things by his own will.

26. And no man says that a statue or an image is made without a Carver or a Painter, and was this Workmanship made without a Workman? O Great Blindness! O Great Impiety! O Great Ignorance!

27. Never, *O Son Tat*, canst thou deprive the Workmanship of the Workman; rather, it is the best Name of all the Names of God, to call him the *Father* of all, for so he is alone; and this is his work to be the Father.

28. And if thou will force me to say anything more boldly, it is his Essence to be pregnant, or great with all things, and to make them.

29. And as without a maker it is impossible that anything should be made, so it is that he should not always be, and always be making all things in Heaven, in the Air, in the Earth, in the Deep, in the whole World, and in every part of the whole, that is or that is not.

30. For there is nothing in the whole World that is not himself; both the things that are, and the things that are not.

31. For the things that are he hath made manifest, and the things that are not he hath hid in himself.

32. This is God that is better than any name; this is he that is secret; this is he that is most manifest; this is he that is to be seen by the Mind; this is he that is visible to the Eye; this is he that hath no body; and this is he that hath many bodies; rather, there is nothing of any body which is not *he*.

33. For he alone is all things.

34. *And for this cause he hath many Names, because he is the One Father; and therefore he hath no Name, because he is the Father of all.*

35. Who therefore can bless thee, or give thanks for thee, or to thee?

36. Which way shall I look when I praise thee? upward? downward? outward? inward?

37. For about these there is no manner nor place, nor anything else of all things that are.



38. But all things are in thee; all things from thee; thou givest all things, and takest nothing; for thou hast all things; and there is nothing that thou hast not.

39. When shall I praise thee, *O Father*, for it is neither possible to comprehend thy hour, nor they time?

40. For what shall I praise thee? For what thou hast made, or for what thou hast not made? for those things thou hast manifested, or for those things thou hast hidden?

41. Wherefore shall I praise thee, as being of myself, or having anything of mine own, or rather being anothers?

42. For thou art what I am, thou art what I do, thou art what I say.

43. *Thou art all things, and there is nothing else thou art not.*

44. *Thou are thou, all that is made, and all that is not made.*

45. The Mind that understandeth.

46. The Father that maketh and frameth.

47. The Good that worketh.

48. The Good that doth all things.

49. Of the matter, the most subtle and slender is *Air*; of the Air the *Soul*; of the soul the *Mind*; of the mind *God*.

The End of the Fifth Book....

THAT GOD IS NOT MANIFEST, AND YET MOST MANIFEST...

### **THE SIXTH BOOK, THAT IN GOD ALONE IS GOOD**

GOD, *O Asclepius*, is in nothing but in God alone, or rather God himself is the Good always.

2. And if it be so, then must he be an Essence or Substance, void of all Motion and Generation; but nothing is void or empty of him.

3. And this Essence hath about or in himself a *Stable* and firm *Operation*, wanting nothing, most full and giving abundantly.

4. One thing is the Beginning of all things, for it giveth all things; and when I name the Good, I mean that which is altogether and always Good.

5. This is present to none, but God alone; for he wanteth nothing that he should desire to have it, nor can anything be taken from him; the loss whereof may grieve him; for sorrow is a part of evilness.

6. Nothing is stronger than he, that he should be opposed by it; nor nothing equal to him, that he should be in love with it; nothing unheard of to be angry, with nothing wiser to be envious at.

7. And none of these being in his Essence, what remains but only the Good?

8. For as in this, being such an Essence, there is none of the evils; so in none of the other things shall the Good be found.

9. For in all other things, are all those other things, as well in the small as the great, and as well in the particulars as in this living Creature; the greater and mightiest of all.

10. For all things that are made or generated, are full of passion, Generation itself being a passion; and where Passion is, there is not the Good; where the Good is, there is no Passion; where it is day, it is not Night; where it is night, it is not Day.

11. Wherefore it is impossible that in Generation should be the Good, but only in that which is not generated or made.

12. Yet as the Participation of all things is in the Matter bound, so also of that which is Good. After this manner is the World Good, as it maketh all things, and in the part of making or doing ... it is Good, but in all other things not good.

13. For it is passable and moveable, and the Maker of passable things.
14. In Man also the Good is ordered (*or taketh denomination*) in comparison of that which is evil; for that which is not very Evil, is here Good; and that which is here called Good, is the least particle, or proportion of Evil.
15. It is impossible, therefore, that the Good should be here pure from Evil; for here the Good groweth Evil, and growing Evil, it doth not still abide Good; and not abiding Good, it becomes Evil.
16. Therefore in God alone is the Good, or rather God is the Good.
17. Therefore, *O Asclepius*, there is nothing in men (*or among men*) but the name of Good, the thing itself is not, for it is impossible; for a material Body receiveth (*or comprehendeth*), is not as being on every side encompassed and coacted with evils, and labours, and griefs, and desires, and wrath, and deceits, and foolish opinions.
18. And in that which is the worst of all, *Asclepius*, every one of the forenames things, is here believed to be the greatest Good, especially that supreme mischief ... the pleasures of the Belly, and the ringleader of all evils. Error is here the absence of the Good.
19. And I give thanks unto God, that, concerning the knowledge of good, put this assurance in my Mind, that it is impossible it should be in the World.
20. For the World is the fulness of Evilness; but God is the fulness of Good, or good of God.
21. For the eminencies of all appearing Beauty, are in the Essence more pure, and more sincere, and peradventure they are also the Essences of it.
22. For we must be bold to say, *Asclepius*, that the Essence of God, if he have an Essence, is ... that which is fair or beautiful; but no good is comprehended in this World.

23. For all things that are subject to the eye, are Idols, and as it were Shadows; but those things that are not subject to the eye, are ever, especially the *Essence* of the Fair and the Good.

24. And as the Eye cannot see God, so neither the Fair and the Good.

25. For those are the parts of God, that partake the Nature of the whole, proper, and familiar unto him alone, inseparable, most lovely, whereof either God is enamoured, or they are enamoured of God.

26. If thou canst understand God, thou shall understand the *Fair*, and the Good, which is most shining, and enlightening, and most enlightened by God.

27. For that Beauty is above Comparison, and that Good is inimitable, as God himself.

28. As, therefore, thou understandest God, so understand the Fair and the Good; for these are incommunicable to any other living creatures, because they are inseparable from God.

29. If thou seek concerning God, thou seekest or asketh also of the Fair, for there is one way which leadeth to the same thing, that is *Piety*, with *Knowledge*.

30. Wherefore, they that are ignorant, and go not in the way of *Piety*, dare call Men Fair and Good, never seeing so much as in a dream, what good is; but being infolded and wrapped upon all evil, and believing that the Evil is the Good, they, by that means, both use it insatiable, and are afraid to be deprived of it; and therefore they strive, by all possible means, that they may not only have it, but also increase it.

31. Such, *O Asclepius*, are the good and fair things of Men, which we can neither love nor hate; for this is the hardest thing of all, that we have need of them, and cannot live without them.

The End of the Sixth Book....

THAT IN GOD ALONE IS GOOD....

**THE SEVENTH BOOK, HIS SECRET SERMON IN THE MOUNT OF REGENERATION, AND THE PROFESSION OF SILENCE**

TO HIS SON *TAT.*

*Tat.*

IN the general speeches, O Father, discoursing of the *Divinity*, thou speakest enigmatically, and didst not clearly reveal thyself, saying, That no man can be saved before *Regeneration*.

2. And when I did humbly entreat thee, at the going up to the Mountain, after thou hadst discoursed to me, having a great desire to learn this *Argument of Regeneration*; because among all the rest, I am ignorant only of this, thou toldst me thou wouldst impart it to me, when I would estrange myself from the world; whereupon I made myself ready, and have vindicated the understanding that is in me, from the deceit of the World.

3. Now, then fulfil my defect, and as thou saidst, instruct me of *Regeneration*, either by word of mouth or secretly; for I know not, *O Trismegistus*, of what Substance, or what Seed, or what Womb, a man is thus born.

4. *Herm.* O Son, this wisdom is to be understood in silence, and the seed is the true Good.

5. *Tat.* Who soweth it, O Father? for I am utterly ignorant and doubtful.

6. *Herm.* The Will of God, O Son.

7. And what manner of Man is he that is thus born? for in this point, I am clean deprived of the Essence that understandeth in me.

8. *Herm.* The Son of God will be another. God made the universe, that in everything consisteth of all powers.

9. *Tat.* Thou tellest me a Riddle, Father, and dost not speak as a Father to a Son.

10. *Herm.* Son, things of this kind are not taught, but are by God, when he pleaseth, brought to remembrance.

11. *Tat.* Thou speakest of things strained, or far fetched, and impossible, Father; and therefore I will directly contradict them.

12. *Herm.* Wilt thou prove a Stranger, Son, to thy Father's kind?

13. *Tat.* Do not envy me, Father, or pardon me, I am thy Natural Son; discourse unto me the manner of *Regeneration*.

14. *Herm.* What shall I say, O my Son? I have nothing to say more than this, That I see in myself an unstrained sight or spectacle, made by the mercy of God; and I am gone out of myself into an immortal body, and am not now, what I was before, but was begotten in Mind.

15. This thing is not taught, nor is it to be seen in this formed element; for which the first compounded form was neglected by me, and that I am now separated from it; for I have both the touch and the measure of it, yet am I now estranged from them.

16. Thou seest, O Son, with thine eyes; but though thou never look so steadfastly upon me, with the Body, and the Bodily sight, thou canst not see nor understand what I am now.

17. *Tat.* Thou hast driven me, O Father, into no small fury and distraction of mind, for I do not now see myself.

18. *Herm.* I would, O Son, that thou also wert gone out of thyself, like them that Dream in their sleep.

19. *Tat.* Then tell me this, who is the Author and Maker of Regeneration?

20. *Herm.* The Child of God, one Man by the Will of God.

21. *Tat.* Now, O Father, thou hast put me to silence for ever, and all my former thoughts have quite left and forsaken me; for I see the greatness and shape of things here below, and nothing but falsehood in them all.

22. And so thence this mortal form is daily changed, and turned by time into increase or diminution, as being falsehood: What therefore is true, O Trismegistus?

23. *Trism.* That, O my Son, which is not troubled, nor bounded; not coloured, not figured, not changed, that which is naked, high. Comprehensible only of itself, unalterable, unbodily.

24. *Tat.* Now I am mad indeed, O Father, for when I thought me to have been made a wise man by thee, with these thoughts, thou hast quite dulled all my senses.

25. *Herm.* Yet is it so as I say, O Son, He that looketh only upon that which is carried upward as Fire, that which is carried downward as Earth, that which is moist as Water, and that which bloweth, or is subject to blast, as Air; how can he sensibly understand that which is neither hard nor moist, nor tangible, nor perspicuous, seeing it is only understood in power and operation? But I beseech and pray to the Mind, which alone can understand the *Generation* which is in God.

26. *Tat.* Then am I, O Father, utterly unable to do it.

27. *Herm.* God forbid, Son, rather draw or pull him unto thee (*or study to know him*) and he will come, *be but willing and it shall be done*; quite (*or make idle*) the senses of the Body, purging thyself from the unreasonable brutish torments of matter.

28. *Tat.* Have I any (revengers or) tormentors in myself, *Father*?

29. *Herm.* Yea, and those not a few, but many, and fearful ones.

30. *Tat.* I do not know them, *Father*.

31. *Herm.* One Torment, Son, is *Ignorance*: a second, *Sorrow*; a third, *Intemperance*; a fourth, *Concupiscence*; a fifth, *Injustice*; a sixth, *Covetousness*; a seventh, *Deceit*; an eighth, *Envy*; a ninth, *Fraud* or *Guile*; a tenth, *Wrath*; an eleventh, *Rashness*; a twelfth, *Maliciousness*.

32. They are in number twelve, and under these many more; some which through the prison of the Body do force the inwardly placed man to suffer sensibly.

33. And they do not suddenly or easily depart from him that hath obtained mercy of God; and herein consists both the manner and the reason of *Regeneration*.

34. For the rest, O Son, hold thy peace, and praise God in silence, and by that means the mercy of God will not cease, or be wanting unto us.

35. Therefore, rejoice, my Son, from henceforward, being purged by the powers of God, to the Knowledge of the Truth.

36. For the revelation of God is come to us, and when that came, all ignorance was cast out.

37. The Knowledge of Joy is come unto us. And when that comes, Sorrow shall fly away to them that are capable.

38. I call unto Joy the power of Temperance, a power whose Virtue is most sweet; let us take her unto ourselves, O son, most willingly, for how at her coming hath she put away Intemperance?

39. Now I call forth, Continence, the power which is over Concupiscence. This, O Son, is the stable and firm foundation of Justice.

40. For see how without labour she hath chased away Injustice; and we are justified, O Son, when Injustice is away.

41. The sixth Virtue, which comes into us, I call *Communion*, which is against Covetousness.

42. And when that (Covetousness) is gone, I call Truth, and when she cometh, Error and Deceit vanisheth.

43. See, O Son, how the Good is fulfilled by the access of Truth; for by this means Envy is gone from us; for Truth is accompanied with the Good, together also with Life and Light.

44. And there came no more any torment of Darkness, but being overcome, they all fled away suddenly and tumultuously.

45. Thou hast understood, O Son, the manner of regeneration; for upon the coming of these Ten, the Intellectual Generation is perfected, and then it driveth away the Twelve; and we have seen it in the Generation itself.

46. Whosoever therefore hath of Mercy obtained this Generation, which is according to God, he leaving all bodily sense, knoweth himself to consist of divine things, and rejoiceth, being made by god Stable and immutable.



47. *Tat.* O Father, I conceive and understand, not by the sight of mine eyes, but by the Intellectual operation, which is by the Powers. I am in Heaven, in the Earth, in the Water, in the Air; I am in Living Creatures, in Plants, in the Womb, everywhere.

48. Yet tell me, further, this one thing, How are the Torments of Darkness, being in number Twelve, driven away and expelled by the Ten Powers? What is the manner of it, *Trismegistus*?

49. This Tabernacle, O Son, consists of the Zodiacal Circle; and this consisting of Twelve numbers, the *Idea* of one; but all formed Nature admit divers Conjugations to the deceiving of Man.

50. And though they be different in themselves, yet are they united in practice (as, for example, Rashness is inseparable from Anger), and they are also indeterminate. Therefore, with good reason do they make their departure, being driven away by the Ten Powers; that is to say, by the dead.

51. For the number of Ten, O Son, is the begetter of Souls. And there Life and Light are united, where the number of *Unity* is born of the spirit.

52. Therefore, according to Reason, Unity hath the number of Ten, and the number of Ten hath Unity.

53. *Tat.* O Father, I now see the Universe and myself in the Mind.

54. *Herm.* This is *Regeneration*, O Son, that we should not any longer fix our imagination upon this Body, subject to the three dimensions, according to this, according to this speech which we have now commented, that we may not at all caluminate the Universe.

55. *Tat.* Tell me, O Father, This body that consists of Powers, shall it ever admit of Dissolution?

56. *Herm.* Good words, Son, and speak not things impossible; for so thou shalt sin, and the eye of thy mind grow wicked.

57. The sensible body of Nature is far from the Essential Generation, for that is subject to dissolution, but this is not; and that is mortal, but this

immortal. Dost thou not know that thou art born a God, and the Son of the One, as I am?

58. *Tat.* How feign would I, O Father, hear that praise given by a Hymn, which thou saidst thou heardest from the Powers, when I was in the *Octonary*?

59. *Herm.* As *Pimander* said, by way of Oracle to the *Octonary*: Thou dost well, O Son, to desire the Solution of the *Tabernacle*, for thou art purified.

60. *Pimander*, the Mind of Absolute Power and Authority, hath delivered no more unto me, than those that are written; knowing that of myself, I can understand all things, and hear, and see what I will. And he commanded me to do those things that are good; and therefore all the powers that are in me sing.

61. *Tat.* I would hear thee, O Father, and understand these things.

62. *Herm.* Be quiet, O Son, and now hearken to that harmonious blessing and thanksgiving; the hymn of *Regeneration*, which I did not determine to have spoken of so plainly, but to thyself in the end of all.

63. Wherefore, this is not taught, but hid in silence.

64. So then, O son, do thou, standing in the open Air, worship, looking to the North Wind, about the going down of the Sun; and to the South, when the Sun ariseth. And now keep silence, Son.

THE SECRET SONG.

The Holy Speech.

65. Let all the Nature of the World entertain the hearing of this Hymn.

66. Be opened, O Earth, and let all the Treasure of the Rain be opened.

67. You Trees, tremble not, for I will sing and praise the Lord of the Creation, and the *All*, and the *One*.

68. Be opened, you Heavens; ye Winds, stand still, and let the immortal Circle of God receive these words.

69. For I will sing and praise him that created all things, that fixed the earth, and hung up the Heavens, and commanded the sweet water to come out of the *Ocean*, into all the World, inhabited and not inhabited, to the use and nourishment of all things or men.

70. That commanded the fire to shine for every action, both to Gods and Men.

71. Let us altogether give him blessing, which rideth upon the Heavens, the Creator of all Nature.

72. This is he that is the Eye of the Mind, and will accept the praise of my Powers.

73. O all ye Powers that are in me, praise the *One*, and *All*.

74. Sing together with my Will, all you Powers that are in me.

75. O Holy knowledge, being enlightened by thee, I magnify the intelligible Light, and rejoice in the joy of the Mind.

76. All my Powers sing praise with me, and now, my Continenence, sing, praise my Righteousness by me; praise that which is righteous.

77. O Communion which is in me; praise the *All*.

78. By me the *Truth* sings praise to the *Truth*, the Good praiseth the Good.

79. O Life, O Light, from us, unto you, comes this praise and thanksgiving.

80. I give thanks unto thee, O Father, the operation or act of my Powers.

81. I give thanks unto thee, O God, the Power of my operations.

82. By me the Word sings praise unto thee; receive by me this reasonable (or verbal) Sacrifice in words.

83. The powers that are in me cry these things, they praise the *All*, they fulfil thy Will; thy Will and counsel is form thee unto thee.

84. *O All*, receive a reasonable sacrifice from all things.

85. *O Life*, save all that is in us; *O Light*, enlighten, *O God*, the *Spirit*; for the Mind guideth (or feedeth) the Word; *O Spirit-bearing Workman*.

86. Thou are *God*, thy *Man* cryeth these things unto thee through, by the Fire, by the Air, by the Earth, by the Water, by the Spirit, by thy Creatures.

87. From eternity I have found (means to) bless and praise thee, and I have what I seek; for I rest in thy Will.

88. *Tat*. O Father, I see thou hast sung this song of praise and blessing, with thy whole Will; and therefore have I put and placed it in my World.

89. *Herm*. Say in thy *Intelligible World*, O Son.

90. *Tat*. I do mean in my *Intelligible world*; for by thy Hymn and song of praise my mind is enlightened, and gladly would I send from my Understanding, a Thanksgiving unto God.

91. *Herm*. Not rashly, O Son.

92. *Tat*. In my Mind, O Father.

93. *Herm*. Those things that I see and contemplate, I infuse them into thee, and therefore say, thou Son, *Tat*, the author of thy succeeding Generations, I send unto god these reasonable sacrifices.

94. *O God*, thou art the Father, thou art the Lord, thou art the Mind, accept these reasonable sacrifices which thou requirest of me.

95. For all things are done as the Mind willeth.

96. Thou, O Son, send this acceptable Sacrifice to god, the Father of all things; but propound it also, O Son, by word.

97. *Tat.* I thank thee, Father, thou hast advised and instructed me thus to give thanks and praise.

98. *Herm.* I am glad, O Son, to see the Truth bring forth the Fruits of Good things, and such immortal Branches.

99. And learn this from me: Above all other Virtues entertain Silence, and impart unto no man, O Son, the tradition of *Regeneration*, lest we be reputed Calumniators; for we both have now sufficiently meditated, I in speaking, thou in hearing. And now thou dost intellectually know thyself and our Father.

The End of the Seventh Book....HIS SECRET SERMON IN THE  
MOUNT OF REGENERATION,  
AND THE PROFESSION OF SILENCE.

### **THE EIGHTH BOOK, THE GREATEST EVIL IN MAN IS THE NOT KNOWING GOD**

WHITHER are you carried, O Men, drunken with drinking strong Wine of Ignorance? which seeing you cannot bear, why do you vomit it up again?

2. Stand, and be sober, and look up again with the Eyes of your heart, and if you cannot all do so, yet do so many as you can.

3. For the malice of Ignorance surroundeth all the Earth, and corrupteth the Soul, shut up in the Body, not suffering it to arrive at the Havens of Salvation.

4. Suffer not yourselves to be carried with the Great Stream, but stem the tide you that can lay hold of the Haven of Safety, and make your full course towards it.

5. Seek on that may lead you by the hand, and conduct you to the door of Truth and Knowledge, where the clear Light is that is pure from Darkness, where there is not one drunken, but all are sober, and in their heart look up to him, whose pleasure it is to be seen.

6. For he cannot be heard with ears, nor seen with eyes, nor expressed in words; but only in mind and heart.

7. But first thou must tear to pieces, and break through the garment thou wearest, the web of Ignorance; the foundation of all Mischief; the bond of Corruption; the dark Coverture; the living Death; the sensible Carcass; the Sepulchre, carried about with us; the domestical Thief, which in what he loves us, hates us, envies us.

8. Such is the hurtful Apparel, wherewith thou art clothed, which draws and pulls thee downward by its own self, lest looking upward and seeing the beauty of Truth, and the Good that is reposed therein, thou shouldst hate the wickedness of this Garment and understand the traps and ambushes which it had laid for thee.

9. Therefore doth it labour to make good those things that seem, and are by the senses, judged and determined; and the things that are truly, it hides, and envelopeth in much matter, filling what it presents unto thee, with hateful pleasure, that thou canst neither hear what thou shouldst hear, nor see what thou shouldst see.

The End of the Eighth Book,  
THE GREATEST EVIL IN MAN IS  
THE NOT KNOWING GOD.

## THE NINTH BOOK, A UNIVERSAL SERMON TO ASCLEPIUS

*Herm.*

ALL that is moved, O *Asclepius*, is it not moved in something and by something?

2. *Asclep.* Yes, indeed.

3. *Herm.* Must not that in which a thing is moved, of necessity be greater than the thing that is moved?

4. Of necessity.

5. And that which moveth, is it not stronger than that which is moved?

6. *Asclep.* It is stronger.

7. *Herm.* That in which a thing is moved, must it not needs have a Nature contrary to that of the thing that is moved?

8. *Asclep.* It must needs.

9. *Herm.* Is not this great World a Body, than which there is no greater?

10. *Asclep.* Yes, confessedly.

11. *Herm.* And is it not solid, as filled with many great bodies, and indeed with all the Bodies that are?

12. *Asclep.* It is so.

13. *Herm.* And is not the World a Body, and a Body that is moved?

14. *Asclep.* It is.

15. *Herm.* Then what a kind of place must it be, wherein it is moved, and of what Nature? Must it not be much bigger, that it may receive the continuity of Motion? And lest which is moved, should for want of room, be stayed, and hindered in the Motion?

16. *Asclep.* It must needs be an immense thing, *Trismegistus*, but of what Nature?

17. *Herm.* Of a contrary Nature, O *Asclepius*. But is not the Nature of things unbodily, contrary to a Body?

18. *Asclep.* Confessedly.

19. *Herm.* Therefore the place is unbodily; but that which is unbodily is either some Divine thing, or God himself. And by something Divine, I do not mean that which was made or begotten.

20. If therefore it be Divine, it is an Essence or Substance; but if it be God, it is above Essence; but he is otherwise intelligible.

21. For the first, God is intelligible, not to himself, but to us; for that which is intelligible is subject to that which understandeth by Sense.

22. Therefore, God is not intelligible to himself; for not being any other thing from that which is understood, he cannot be understood by himself.

23. But he is another thing from us, and therefore he is understood by us.

24. If therefore Place be intelligible, it is not Place but God; but if God be intelligible, he is intelligible not as Place, but as a capable Operation.

25. Now, everything that is moved, is moved not in or by that which is moved, but in that which standeth or resteth, and that which moveth standeth or resteth; for it is impossible it should be moved with it.

26. *Asclep.* How, then, O *Trismegistus*, are those things that are here moved with the things that are moved? for thou sayest that the Spheres that wander, are moved by the sphere that wanders not.

27. *Herm.* That, O *Asclepius*, is not a moving together, but a counter motion; for they are not moved after a like manner, but contrary one to the other; and contrariety hath a standing resistance of motion, for the ..., or resistance, is a staying of Motion.

28. Therefore, the wandering spheres being moved contrarily to that Sphere which wandereth not, shall have one from another contrarily standing of itself.

29. For this Bear thou seest neither rise nor go down, but turning always about the same; dost thou think it moveth or standeth still?

30. *Asclep.* I think it moves, *Trismegistus*.

31. What motion, O *Asclepius*?

32. *Asclep.* A motion that is always carried about the same.

33. But the Circulation which is about the same, and the motion bout the same, are both hidden by Station; for that which is about the same, forbids that which is above the same, if it stand to that which is about the same.



34. And so the contrary motion stands fast always, being always established by the contrariety.

35. But I will give thee concerning this matter, an Earthly Example, that may be seen with eyes.

36. Look upon any of these living Creatures upon Earth, as Man, for example, and see him swimming; for as the Water is carried one way, the reluctance or resistance of his feet and hands is made a station to the Man, that he should not be carried with the Water, nor sink underneath it.

37. *Asclep.* Thou hast laid down a very clear example, *Trismegistus*.

38. *Herm.* Therefore, every motion is in station, and is moved of station.

39. The motion, then, of the World, and of every material living thing, happeneth not to be done by those things that are without the World, but by those things within it, a Soul, or Spirit, or some other unbodily thing, to those things that are without it.

40. For an inanimate Body doth not know, much less a Body if it be wholly inanimate.

41. *Asclep.* What meaneth thou by this, O *Trismegistus*, wood and stones, and all other inanimate things, are they not moving Bodies?

42. *Herm.* By no means, O *Asclepius*, for that within the Body, which moves the inanimate thing, is not the Body, that moves both as well the Body of that which beareth, as the Body of that which is born; for one dead or inanimate thing cannot move another; that which moveth, must needs be alive if it move.

43. Thou seest therefore how the Soul is surcharged, when it carrieth two Bodies.

44. And now it is manifest that the things that are moved in something, and by something.

45. *Asclep.* The things that are moved, O *Trismegistus*, must needs be moved in that which is void, or empty vacuum, ....

46. Be advised, O *Asclepius*, for all the things that are, there is nothing empty, only that which is not, is empty and a stranger to existence or being.

47. But that which is could not be if it were not full of existence; for that which is in being or existence, can never be made empty.

48. *Asclep.* Are there not therefore some things that are empty, O *Trismegistus*, as an empty Barrel, an empty Hogshead, an empty Will, an empty Wine-press, and many such like?

49. *Herm.* O the grossness of thy error, O *Asclepius*; those things that are most full and replenished, dost thou account them void and empty?

50. *Asclep.* What may be thy meaning, *Trismegistus*?

51. *Herm.* Is not the Air a Body?

52. *Asclep.* It is a Body.

53. *Herm.* Why then this Body, does it not pass through all things that are? And passing through them, fill them? and that Body, doth it not consist of the mixture of the four? therefore, all those things which thou callest empty are full of Air.

54. Therefore, those things thou callest empty, thou oughtest to call them hollow, not empty; for they exist and are full of Air and Spirit.

55. *Asclep.* This reason is beyond all contradiction, O *Trismegistus*, but what shall we call the place in which the whole Universe is moved?

56. *Herm.* Call it incorporeal, O *Asclepius*.

57. *Asclep.* What is that, incorporeal or unbodily?

58. *Herm.* The Mind and Reason, the whole, wholly comprehending itself, free from all Body, undeceivable, invisible, impassible from a Body itself, standing fast in itself, capable of all things, and that Savour of the things that are.

59. Whereof the *Good*, the *Truth*, the *Archetypal Light*, the Archetype of the Soul, are, as it were, Beams.

60. *Asclep*. Why, then, what is God?

61. *Herm*. That which is none of these things, yet is, and is the cause of being to all, and every one of the things that are; for he left nothing destitute of Being.

62. And all things are made of things that are, and not of things that are not; for the things that are not, have not the nature to be able to be made; and again, the things that are, have not the nature never to be, or not to be at all.

63. *Asclep*. What dost thou then say at length that God is?

64. *Herm*. God is not a Mind, but the Cause that the Mind is; not a spirit, but the Cause that the Spirit is; not Light, but the Cause that Light is.

65. Therefore, we must worship God by these two Appellations, which are proper to him alone, and to no other.

67. And this he is and nothing else; but all other things are separable from the nature of Good.

68. For the Body and the Soul have no place that is capable of or can contain the Good.

69. For the greatness of Good is as great as the Existence of all things that are, both bodily and unbodily, both sensible and intelligible.

70. This is the Good, even God.

71. See, therefore, that thou do not at any time call ought else Good, for so thou shalt be impious; or any else God, but only the Good, for so thou shalt again be impious.

72. In Word it is often said by all men the Good, but all men do not understand what it is; but through Ignorance they call both the Gods, and some men, Good, that can never be, or be made so.

73. Therefore all the other Gods are honoured with the title or appellation of God, but God is the Good, not according to Heaven, but Nature.

74. For there is one Nature of God, even the Good, and one kind of them both, from whence all are kinds.

75. For he that is Good, is the giver of all things, and takes nothing; and, therefore, God gives all things, and receives nothing.

76. The other title and appellation, is the Father, because of his making all things; for it is the part of a Father to make.

77. Therefore, it hath been the greatest and most Religious care in this life, to them that are Wise, and well-minded, to beget children.

78. As likewise it is the greatest misfortune and impiety, for any to be separated from men, without children; and this man is punished after Death by the *Demons*, and the punishment is this: To have the Soul of this childless man, adjudged and condemned, to a Body that neither hath the nature of a man, nor of a woman, which is an accursed thing under the Sun.

79. Therefore, O *Asclepius*, never congratulate any man that is childless; but on the contrary pity his misfortune, knowing what punishment abides, and is prepared for him.

80. Let so many, and such manner of things, O *Asclepius*, be said as a certain precognition of all things in Nature.

The End of the Ninth Book,  
A UNIVERSAL SERMON TO ASCLEPIUS.

## THE TENTH BOOK, THE MIND TO HERMES

FORBEAR thy Speech, O *Hermes Trismegistus*, and call to mind to those things that are said; but I will not delay to speak what comes into my mind, sithence many men have spoken many things, and those very different, concerning the Universe, and Good; but I have not learned the Truth.

2. Therefore, the Lord make it plain to me in this point; for I will believe thee only, for the manifestation of these things.
3. Then said the Mind how the case stands.
4. God and All.
5. God, Eternity, the World, Time, Generation.
6. God made Eternity, Eternity the World, the world Time, and Time Generation.
7. Of God, as it were, the Substance, is the *Good*, the *Fair*, *Blessedness*, *Wisdom*.
8. Of Eternity, Identity, or Selfness.
9. Of the World, Order.
10. Of Time, Change.
11. Of Generation, Life and Death.
12. But the Operation of God, is Mind and Soul.
13. Of Eternity, Permanence, or Long-lasting, and Immortality.
14. Of the World, Restitution, and Decay, or Destruction.
15. Of Time, Augmentation and Diminution.
16. And of Generation qualities.
17. Therefore, Eternity is in God.
18. The World in Eternity.
19. Time in the World.

20. And Generation in Time.
21. And Eternity standeth about God.
22. The World is moved in Eternity.
23. Time is determined in the World.
24. Generation is done in Time.
25. Therefore, the Spring and Fountain of all things is God.
26. The Substance Eternity.
27. The Matter is the World.
28. The Power of God is Eternity.
29. And the Work of Eternity, is the World not yet made, and yet ever made by Eternity.
30. Therefore, shall nothing be at any time destroyed, for Eternity is incorruptible.
31. Neither can anything perish, or be destroyed in the World, the World being contained and embraced by Eternity.
32. But what is the Wisdom of God? Even the *Good* and the *Fair*, and *Blessedness*, and every Virtue, and Eternity.
33. Eternity, therefore, put into the Matter Immortality and Everlastingness; for the Generation of that depends upon Eternity, even as Eternity doth of God.
34. For Generation and Time, in Heaven and in Earth, are of a double Nature; in Heaven they are unchangeable and incorruptible; but on Earth they are changeable and corruptible.
35. And the Soul of Eternity is God; and the Soul of the World, Eternity; and of the Earth, Heaven.

36. God is in the Mind, the Mind in the Soul, the Soul in the Matter, all things by Eternity.

37. All this Universal Body, in which are all Bodies, is full of Soul, the Soul full of Mind, the Mind full of God.

38. For within he fills them, and without he contains them, quickening the Universe.

39. Without, he quickens this perfect living thing the World, and within all living Creatures.

40. And above in Heaven he abides in Identity or Selfness, but below upon Earth he changeth Generation.

41. Eternity comprehendeth the World either by necessity, or Providence, or Nature.

42. And if any man shall think any other thing, it is God that actuateth, or operateth this All.

43. But the operation or Act of God, is Power insuperable, to which none may compare anything, either Humane or Divine.

44. Therefore, O *Hermes*, think none of these things below, or the things above, in anywise like unto God; for if thou dost, thou errest from the Truth.

45. For nothing can be like the unlike, and only, and One; nor mayest thou think that he hath given of his Power to any other thing.

46. For who after him can make anything, either of Life or Immortality: of Change or of Quality? and himself, what other things should he make?

47. For God is not idle, for then all things would be idle; for all things are full of God.

48. But there is not anywhere in the World, such a thing as Idleness; for Idleness is a name that implieth a thing void or empty, both of a Doer, and a thing done.

49. But all things must necessarily be made or done both always, and according to the nature of every place.

50. For he that maketh or doth, is in all things, yet not fastened or comprehended in anything; nor making or doing one thing, but all things.

51. For being an active or operating Power, and sufficient of himself for the things that are made, and the things that are made are under him.

52. Look upon, through me, the World is subject to thy sight, and understand exactly the Beauty thereof.

53. A Body perpetual, than the which there is nothing more ancient, yet always vigorous and young.

54. See also the Seven Worlds set over us, adorned with an everlasting order, and filling Eternity with a different course.

55. For all things are full of Light, but the Fire is nowhere.

56. For the friendship and commixture of contraries and unlike, become Light shining from the Act or Operation of God, the Father of all Good, the Prince of all Order, and the Ruler of the Seven Worlds.

57. Look also upon the Moon, the forerunner of them all, the Instrument of Nature, and which changeth the matter here below.

58. Behold the Earth the middle of the Whole, the firm and stable Foundation of the Fair World, the Feeder and Nurse of Earthly things.

59. Consider, moreover, how great the multitude is of immortal living things, and of mortal ones also; and see the Moon going about in the midst of both, to wit, of things immortal and mortal.



60. But all things are full of Soul, and all things are properly moved by it; some things about the Heaven, and some things about the Earth; and neither of those on the right hand to the left; nor those on the left hand to the right; nor those things that are above, downward; nor those things that are below, upwards.

61. And that all these things are made, O beloved *Hermes*, thou needst not learn of me.

62. For they are Bodies, and have a Soul, and are moved.

63. And that all these should come together into one, it is impossible without something to gather them together.

64. Therefore, there must be some such ones, and he altogether One.

65. For seeing that the motions are divers, and many, and the Bodies not alike, and yet one ordered swiftness among them all; It is impossible there should be two or more Makers.

66. For one order is not kept by many.

67. But in the weaker there would be jealousy of the stronger, and thence also contentions.

68. And if there were one Maker, of mutable mortal living Wights, he would desire also to make immortal ones, as he that were the Maker of immortal ones, would do to make mortal.

69. Moreover, also, if there were two, the Matter of being one, who should be chief, or have the disposing of the future?

70. Or if both of them, which of them the greater part?

71. But thinks thus that every living Body hath its consistence of Matter and soul; and of that which is immortal, and that which is mortal and unreasonable.

72. For all living Bodies have a Soul; and those things that are not living, are only matter by itself.

73. And the Soul likewise of itself drawing near her Maker, is the cause of Life and Being, and Being the cause of Life is, after a manner, the cause of immortal things.

74. How then are mortal Wights other from immortal?

75. Or how cannot he make living Wights, that causeth immortal things and immortality?

76. That there is some Body that doth these things it is apparent, and that he is also one, it is most manifest.

77. For there is one Soul, one Life, and one matter.

78. Who is this? who can it be, other than the *One God*?

79. For whom else can it benefit to make living things, save only God alone?

80. There is therefore One God.

81. For it is a ridiculous thing to confess the World to be one, one Sun, one Moon, one Divinity, and yet to have, I know not how many gods.

82. He therefore being One, doth all things in many things.

83. And what great thing is it for God, to make Life, and Soul, and Immortality, and Change, when thyself dost so many things?

84. For thou both seest, speaketh, and hearest, smellest, tastest, and touchest, walkest, understandest, and breathest.

85. And it is not one that sees, and another that heareth, and another that speaketh, and another that toucheth, and another that smelleth, and another that walketh, and another that understandeth, and another that breatheth; but one that doth all these things.

86. Yet neither can these things possibly be without God.

87. For as thou, if thou shouldest cease from doing these things, were not a living wight, so if God should cease from those, he were not (which is not lawful to say) any longer God.

88. For if it be already demonstrated that nothing can be idle or empty, how much more may be affirmed of God?

89. For if there be anything which he doth not do, then is he (if it were lawful to say so) imperfect.

90. Whereas, seeing he is not idle, but perfect, certainly he doth all things.

91. Now give thyself unto me, O *Hermes*, for a little while, thou shalt the more easily understand, that it is the necessary work of God, that all things should be made or done that are done, or were once done, or shall be done.

92. And this, O best beloved, is Life.

93. And this is the *Fair*.

94. And this is the *Good*.

95. And this is *God*.

96. And if thou will understand this by work also, mark what happens to thyself when thou will generate.

97. And yet this is not like unto him, for he is not sensible of pleasure, for neither hath he any other Fellow Workman.

98. But being himself the only Workman, he is always in the work, himself being that which he doth or maketh.

99. For all things, if they were separate from him, must needs fall and die, as there being no life in them.

100. And again, if all things be living wights, both which are in heaven, and upon earth, and that there be one Life in all things which are made

by God, and that is God, then certainly all things are made or done by God.

101. Life is the union of the Mind and the Soul.

102. But death is not the destruction of those things that were gathered together, but a dissolving of the Union.

103. The Image therefore of God, is Eternity; of Eternity, the World; of the World, the Sun: of the Sun, Man.

104. But the people say, That changing is Death, because the body is dissolved, and the Life goeth into that which appeareth not.

105. By this discourse, my dearest *Hermes*, I affirm as thou hearest. That the World is changed, because every day part thereof becomes invisible, but that it is never dissolved.

106. And these are the Passions of the World, Revolutions and Occultations, and Revolution is a turning, but Occultation is Renovation.

107. And the World being all formed, hath not the forms lying without it, but itself changeth in itself.

108. Seeing then the World is all formed, what must he be that made it! for without form, he cannot be.

109. And if he be all formed, he will be kept like the World, but if he have but one form, he shall be in this regardless of the world.

110. What do we then say that he is? We will not raise any doubts by our speech, for nothing that is doubtful concerning God is yet known.

111. He hath therefore one *Idea*, which is proper to him, which, because it is unbodily, is not subject to the sight, and yet shows all forms by the Bodies.

112. And do not wonder if there be an incorruptible *Idea*.

113. For they are like the Margents of the Speech, which is in writing; for they seem to be high and swelling, but they are by nature smooth and even.

114. But understand well this that I say, more boldly, for it is more true: As man cannot live without life, so neither can God live not doing good.

115. For this is, as it were, the Life and Motion of God, to Move all things, and Quicken them.

116. But some of the things I have said, must have a particular explanation; Understand then what I say.

117. All things are in God, not as lying in a place, for Place is both a body and immoveable, and those things that are placed, have no motion.

118. For they lie otherwise in that which is unbodily, than in the fantasie, or to appearance.

119. Consider him that contains all things, and understand that nothing is more capacious, than that which is incorporeal, nothing more swift, nothing more powerful, but it is most capacious, most swift, and most strong.

120. And judge of this by thyself, command thy Soul to go into *India*, and sooner than thou canst bid it, it will be there.

121. Bid it likewise pass over the *Ocean*, and suddenly it will be there; not as passing from place to place, but suddenly it will be there.

122. Command it to fly into Heaven, and it will not need no wings, neither shall anything hinder it, not the fire of the Sun, not the *Aether*, not the turning of the Spheres, not the bodies of any other Stars, but cutting through all, it will fly up to the last and furthest body.

123. And if thou wilt even break the whole, and see those things that are without the world (if there be anything without), thou mayest.

124. Behold, how great power, how great swiftness thou hast! Canst thou do all thee things, and cannot God?

125. After this manner, therefore, contemplate God to have all the whole world to himself, as it were, all thoughts, or intellections.

126. If therefore thou wilt not equal thyself to God, thou canst not understand God.

127. For the like is intelligible by the like.

128. Increase thyself unto an immeasurable greatness, leaping beyond every Body, and transcending all Time, become Eternity, and thou shalt understand God: If thou believe in thyself, that nothing is impossible, but accountest thyself immortal, and that thou canst understand all things, every Art, every Science, and the manner and custom of every living thing.

129. Become higher than all height, lower than all depths, comprehend in thyself the qualitates of all the Creatures, of the Fire, the Water, the Dry, and Moist, and conceive likewise, that thou canst at once be everywhere, in the Sea, in the Earth.

130. Thou shalt at once understand thyself, not yet begotten in the Womb, young, old, to be dead, the things after death, and all these together, as also times, places, deeds, qualities, quantities, or else thou canst not yet understand God.

131. But if thou shut up thy Soul in the Body, and abuse it, and say, I understand nothing, I can do nothing, I am afraid of the Sea, I cannot climb up to Heaven, I know not who I am, I cannot tell what I shall be: What hast thou to do with god? for thou canst understand none of those Fair and Good things, and be a lover of the body and Evil.

132. For it is the greatest Evil, not to know God.

133. But to be able to know, and to will, and to hope, is the straight way, and Divine way, proper to the Good, and it will everywhere meet thee, and everywhere be seen of thee, plain and easy, when thou dost not expect or look for it; it will meet thee waking, sleeping, sailing, travelling, by night, by day, when thou speakest, and when thou keepest silence.

134. For there is nothing which is not the Image of God.

135. And yet thou sayest, God is invisible; but be advised, for who is more manifest than He?

136. For therefore hath he made all things, that thou by all things mayest see Him.

137. This is the Good of God, this is the Virtue, to appear, and to be seen in all things.

138. There is nothing invisible, no, not of those things that are incorporeal.

139. The Mind is seen in understanding, and God is seen in doing or making.

140. Let these things thus far forth, be made manifest unto thee, O *Trismegistus*.

141. Understand in like manner, all other things by thyself, and thou shalt not be deceived.

The End of the Tenth Book,  
THE MIND TO HERMES.

### THE ELEVENTH BOOK OF THE COMMON MIND, TO TAT

THE Mind, O *Tat*, is of the very Essence of God, if yet there be any Essence of God.

2. What kind of Essence that is, he alone knows himself exactly.

3. The Mind therefore is not cut off, or divided from the essentiality of God, but united as the light of the Sun.

4. And this Mind in men, is God, and therefore are some men Divine, and their Humanity is near Divinity.

5. For the good *Demon* called the Gods, immortal Men, and men mortal Gods.

6. But in the brute Beast, or unreasonable living Wights, the Mind is their Nature.

7. For where there is a Soul, there is the Mind, as where there is Life there is also a Soul.

8. In living Creatures, therefore, that are without Reason, the Soul is Life, void of the operations of the Mind.

9. For the Mind is the Benefactor of the Souls of men, and worketh to the proper Good.

10. And in unreasonable things it co-operateth with the nature of everyone of them, but in men it worketh against their Natures.

11. For the Soul being in the body, is straightway made Evil by Sorrow, and Grief, and Pleasure, or Delight.

12. For Grief and Pleasure, flow like juices from the compound Body, whereinto when the Soul entereth or descendeth, she is moistened and tintured with them.

13. As many Souls, therefore, as the Mind governeth, or overruleth, to them it shows its own Light, resisting their prepossessions or presumptions.

14. As a good Physician grieveth the Body, prepossessed of a disease, by burning or lancing it for health's sake;

15. After the same manner also the Mind grieveth the Soul, by drawing it out of Pleasure, from whence every disease of the Soul proceedeth.

16. But the Great Disease of the Soul is *Atheism*, because that opinion followeth to all Evil, and no Good.

17. Therefore, the Mind resisting, it procureth Good to the Soul, as a Physician to the Body.



18. But as many Souls of Men, as do not admit or entertain the Mind for their Governor, do suffer the same thing that the Soul of unreasonable living things.

19. For the Soul being a *Co-operator* with them, permits or leaves them to their concupiscences, whereunto they are carried by the torrent of their Appetite, and so tend to brutishness.

20. And as brute Bests, they are angry without reason, and they desire without reason, and never cease, nor are satisfied with evil.

21. For unreasonable Angers and Desires are the most exceeding Evils.

22. And therefore hath God set the Mind over there, as a Revenger and Reprover of them.

23. *Tat.* Here, O Father, that discourse of Fate of Destiny, which thou madest to me, is in danger of being overthrown; for if it be fatal for any man to commit *Adultery* or *Sacrilege*, or do any evil, he is punished also, though he, of necessity, do the work of the Fate or Destiny.

24. *Herm.* All things, O Son, are the work of Fate, and without it can no bodily thing, either Good or Evil, be done.

25. For it is decreed by Fate, that he that doth any evil, should also suffer for it.

26. And therefore he doth it, that he may suffer that which he suffereth because he did it.

27. But for the present, let alone that speech, concerning Evil and Fate, for at other times we have spoken of it.

28. Now, our discourse is about the Mind, and what it can do, and how it differs, and is in men such a one, but in brute Beasts changed.

29. And again in brute Beasts it is not beneficial, but in men by quenching both their Anger and Concupiscences.

30. And of man, thou must understand, some to be rational, or governed by reason, and some irrational.

31. But all men are subject to Fate, and to Generation, and Change, for these are the beginning and end of Fate or Destiny

32. And all men suffer those things that are decreed by Fate.

33. But rational men, over whom, as we said, the mind bears rule, do not suffer like unto other men; but being free from viciousness, and being not evil, they do suffer evil.

34. *Tat.* How sayest thou this again, Father? An *Adulterer*, is he not evil? A *Murderer*, is he not evil? and so of others.

35. *Herm.* But the rational man, O Son, will not suffer for Adultery, but as the Adulterer not for Murder, but as the Murderer.

36. And it is impossible to escape the Quality of change as of Generation, but the Viciousness, he that hath the Mind, may escape.

37. And therefore, O Son, I have always heard the good *Demon* say, and if he had delivered it in writing, he had much profited all mankind. For he alone, O So, as the first born, God seeing all things, truly spake Divine words. *I have heard him sometimes, That all things are one thing, especially intelligible Bodies, or that all especially intelligible Bodies are one.*

38. We live in Power, in Act, and in Eternity.

39. Therefore, a good mind is that which the soul of him is.

40. And if this be so, then no intelligible thing differs from intelligible things.

41. As, therefore, it is possible that the Mind, the Prince of all things; so likewise, that the soul that is of God, can do whatsoever it will.

42. But understand thou well, for this Discourse I have made to the Question which thou askest of me before, I man concerning Fate and the Mind.

43. First, if, O Son, thou shalt diligently withdraw thyself from all contentious speeches, thou shalt find that in Truth, the Mind, the Soul of God bears rule over all things, both over Fate, and Law, and all other things.

44. And nothing is impossible to him, no, not of the things that are of Fate.

45. Therefore, though the Soul of Man be above it, let it not neglect the things that happen to be under Fate.

46. And these, thus far, were the excellent sayings of the good *Demon*.

47. *Tat.* Most divinely spoken, O Father, and truly and profitably, yet clear this one thing unto me.

48. Thou sayest, that in brute Beasts the Mind worketh or acteth after the manner of Nature, co-operating also with their )... impetus) inclinations.

49. Now, the impetuous inclinations of brute Beasts, as I conceive, are Passions. If, therefore, the Mind do co-operate with these impetuous Inclinations, and that they are the Passions in brute Beasts, certainly the Mind is also a Passion, conforming itself to Passions.

50. *Herm.* Well done, Son, thou askest nobly, and yet it is just that I should answer thee.

51. All incorporeal things, O Son, that are in the Body, are passible, nay, they are properly Passions.

52. Everything that moveth is incorporeal; everything that is moved is a Body; and it is moved into the Bodies by the Mind. Now, Motion is passion, and there they both suffer; as well that which moveth, as that which is moved, as well that which ruleth, as that which is ruled.

53. But being freed from the Body, it is freed likewise from Passion.

54. But especially, O Son, there is nothing impassible, but all things are passible.

55. But Passion differs from that which is passible; for that (Passion) acteth, but this suffers.

56. Bodies also of themselves do act; for either they are unmoveable, or else are moved; and which soever it be, it is a Passion.

57. But incorporeal things do always act, or work, and therefore they are passible.

58. Let not, therefore, the appellations or names trouble thee, for Action and Passion are the same thing, but that it is not grievous to use the more honorable name.

59. *Tat.* O Father, thou hast delivered this discourse most plainly.

60. *Herm.* Consider this also, O Son, that God hath freely bestowed upon man, above all other living things, these two, to wit, Mind and Speech, or Reason ..., equal to immortality.

61. These, if any man use, or employ upon what he ought, he shall differ nothing from the Immortals.

62. Yea, rather going out of the Body, he shall be guided and led by them, both into the Choir and Society of the God, and blessed ones.

63. *Tat.* Do not other living creatures use speech, O Father?

64. *Herm.* No, Son, but only voice. Now, speech and voice do differ exceeding much; for speech is common to all men, but voice is proper unto every kind of living thing.

65. *Tat.* Yea, but the Speech of men is different, O Father; every man according to his Nation.

66. *Herm.* It is true, O Son, they do differ: yet as Man is one, so is Speech one also, and it is interpreted and found the same, both in *Egypt, Persia, and Greece.*

67. But thou seemest unto me, Son, to be ignorant of the Vertue, or Power and greatness of Speech.

68. For the blessed God, the good *Demon* said or commanded the Soul to be in the Body, the Mind in the Soul ..., the Word, or Speech, or Reason in the Mind, and the Mind in God, and that God is the Father of them all.

69. Therefore, the Word is the Image of the Mind, and the Mind of God, and the Body of the *Idea*, and the *Idea* of the Soul.

70. Therefore, of the Matter, the subtilest or smallest part is Air, of the Air the Soul, of the Soul the Mind, of the Mind God.

71. And God is about all things, and through all things, but the Mind about the Soul, the Soul about the Air, and the Air about the Matter.

72. But Necessity, and Providence, and Nature, are the Organs or Instruments of the World, and of the Order of Matter.

73. For of those things that are intelligible, everyone is; but the essence of them is Identity.

74. But of the Bodies of the whole, or universe, every one is many things.

75. For the Bodies that are put together, and that have, and make their changes into other, having this Identity, do always and preserve the incorruption of the Identity.

76. But in every one of the compound Bodies there is a Number

77. For without Number it is impossible there should be consistence or constitution, or composition, or dissolution.

78. But Unities do both beget and increase Numbers, and again being dissolved, come into themselves.

79. And the Matter is One.

80. But this whole World, the great God, and the Image of the Greater, and united unto him, and concerning the Order, and Will of the Father, is the fulness of Life.

81. And there is nothing therein, through all the Eternity of the Revolution, neither of the whole, nor of the parts which doth not live.

82. For there is nothing dead, that either hath been, or is, or shall be in the World.

83. For the Father would have it, as long as it lasts, to be a living thing; and therefore it must needs be God also.

84. How, therefore, O Son, can there be in God in the image of the Universe, in the fulness of Life, any dead things?

85. For dying is Corruption, and corruption is destruction.

86. How, then, can any part of the incorruptible be corrupted, or of God be destroyed?

87. *Tat.* Therefore, O Father, do not the living things in the World die, though they be parts thereof?

88. *Herm.* Be wary in thy speech, O Son, and not deceived in the names of things.

89. For they do not die, O Son, but as Compound bodies they are dissolved.

90. But dissolution is not death; and they are dissolved, not that they may be destroyed, but that they may be made new.

91. *Tat.* What, then, is the operation of Life? Is it not Motion?

92. *Herm.* And what is there in the World unmoveable? Nothing at all, O Son.

93. *Tat.* Why, doth not the Earth seem immoveable to thee, O Father?

94. *Herm.* No, but subject to many Motions, though after a manner, it alone be stable.

95. What a ridiculous thing it were that the nurse of all things should be immoveable which beareth and bringeth forth all things.

96. For it is impossible that anything that bringeth forth, should bring forth without Motion.

97. And a ridiculous question it is, whether the fourth part of the whole, be idle; for the word immoveable, or without motion, signifies nothing else, but idleness.

98. Know generally, O Son, that whatsoever is in the World is moved either according to Augmentation or Diminution.

99. But that which is moved, liveth also, yet it is not necessary that a living thing should be or continue the same.

100. For while the whole world is together, it is unchangeable, O Son, but all the parts thereof are changeable.

101. Yet nothing is corrupted or destroyed, and quite abolished, but the names trouble men.

102. For Generation is not Life, but Sense, neither is Change Death, but Forgetfulness, or rather Occultation, and lying hid. Or better thus:--

*103. For Generation is not a Creation of Life, but a production of things to Sense, and making them manifest. Neither is Change Death, but an Occultation of hiding of that which was.*

104. These things being so, all things are Immortal, Matter, Life, Spirit, Soul, Mind, whereof every living thing consisteth.

105. Every living thing therefore is Immortal, because of the Mind, but especially Man, who both receiveth God, and converseth with him.

106. For with this living wight, alone is God familiar; in the night by dreams, in the day by Symbols or Signs.

107. And by all things doth he foretell him of things to come, by Birds, by Fowls, by the Spirit, or Wind, and by an Oak.

108. Wherefore, also, Man professeth to know things that have been, things that are present, and things to come.

109. Consider this also, O Son, that every other living Creature goeth upon one part of the World, Swimming things in the Water, Land wights upon the Earth, Flying Fowls in the Air.

110. But Man useth all these, the Earth, the Water, the Air, and the Fire, nay, he seeth and toucheth Heaven by his senses.

111. But God is both about all things, and through all things, for he is both Act and Power.

112. And it is no hard thing, O Son, to understand God.

113. And if thou wilt also see him, look upon the Necessity of things that appear, and the Providence of things that have been, and are done.

114. See the Matter being most full of Life, and so great a God moved, with all good, and Fair, both Gods, and *Demons*, and Men.

115. *Tat.* But these, O Father, are wholly Acts, or Operations.

116. *Herm.* If they be, therefore, wholly acts or operations, O Son, by whom are they acted or operated, but by God?

117. Or art thou ignorant, that as parts of the World, are Heaven, and Earth, and Water, and Air; after the same manner, the Members of God, are Life, and Immortality, and Eternity, and Spirit, and Necessity, and Providence, and Nature, and Soul, and Mind, and the Continuance or Perseverance of all these which is called Good.

118. And there is not anything of all that hath been, and all that is, where God is not.

119. *Tat.* What, in Matter, O Father?

120. *Herm.* The Matter, Son, what is it without God, that thou shouldst ascribe a proper place to it?



121. Or what dost thou think it to be? Peradventure, some heap that is not actuated or operated.

122. But if it be actuated, by whom is it actuated? for we have said, that Acts or Operations, are the parts of God.

123. By whom are all living things quickened? and the Immortal, by whom are they immortalized? the things that are changeable, by whom are they changed?

124. Whether thou speak of Matter or Body, or Essence, know that all these are Acts of God.

125. And that the Act of Matter is materiality, and of the Bodies corporality, and of essence essentiality, and this is God the whole.

126. And in the whole, there is nothing that is not God.

127. Wherefore, about God, there is neither Greatness, Place, Quality, Figure, or time, for he is All, and the All, through all, and about all.

128. This Word, O Son, worship and adore. And the only service of God, is not to be evil.

The End of the Eleventh Book  
OF THE COMMON MIND, TO TAT.

## THE TWELFTH BOOK, HIS CRATER OR MONAS

THE Workman made this Universal World, not with his Hands, but his Word.

2. Therefore thus think of him, as present everywhere, and being always, and making all things; and one above, that by his Will hath framed the things that are.

3. For that is his Body, not tangible, nor visible, nor measurable, nor extensible, nor like any other body.

4. For it is neither Fire, nor Water, nor Air, nor Wind, but all these things are of him; for being Good, he hath dedicated that name unto himself alone.

5. But he would also adorn the Earth, but with the Ornament of a Divine Body.

6. And he sent Man, an Immortal, and a mortal wight.

7. And Man had more than all living Creatures, and the World; because of his Speech, and Mind.

8. For Man became the Spectator of the Works of God, and wondered, and acknowledged the Maker.

9. For he divided Speech among all Men, but not Mind, and yet he envied not any; for Envy comes not thither, but is abode here below in the Souls of men, that have not the Mind.

10. *Tat.* But wherefore, Father, did not God distribute the Mind to all men?

11. *Herm.* Because it pleased him, O Son, to set that in the middle among all souls, as a reward to strive for.

12. *Tat.* And where hath he set it?

13. *Herm.* Filling a large Cup or Bowl therewith, he sent it down, giving also a Cryer or Proclaimer.

14. And he commanded him to proclaim these things to the souls of men.

15. Dip and wash thyself, thou that art able in this Cup or Bowl: Thou that believeth that thou shalt return to him that sent this Cup; thou that acknowledgest whereunto thou wert made.

16. As many, therefore, as understood the Proclamation, and were baptized, or dowsed into the Mind, these were made partakers of knowledge, and became perfect men, receiving the Mind.

17. But as many as missed of the Proclamation, they received Speech, but not Mind; being ignorant whereunto they were made, or by whom.

18. But their Senses are just like to brute Beasts, and having their temper in Anger and Wrath, they do not admire the things worthy of looking on.

19. But wholly addicted to the pleasures and desires of the Body, they believe that man was made for them.

20. But as many as partake of the gift of God; these, O *Tat*, in comparison of their works, are rather immortal, than mortal men.

21. Comprehending all things in their Mind, which are upon Earth, which are in Heaven, and if there be anything above Heaven.

22. And lifting up themselves so high, they see the Good, and seeing it, they account it a miserable calamity to make their abode here.

23. And despising all things bodily and unbodily, they make haste to the *One and Only*.

24. Thus, O *Tat*, is the knowledge of the Mind, the beholding of Divine things, and the Understanding of God, the Cup itself, being Divine.

25. *Tat*. And I, O Father, would be baptized and drenched therein.

26. *Herm*. Except thou first hate thy body, O Son, thou canst not love thyself, but loving thyself, thou shalt have the Mind, and having the Mind, thou shalt also partake the Knowledge or Science.

27. *Tat*. How meanest thou, O Father?

28. *Herm*. Because it is impossible, O Son, to be conversant about things Mortal and Divine.

29. For the things that are, being two Bodies, and things incorporeal, wherein is the Mortal and the Divine, the Election or Choice of either is left to him that will choose: For no man can choose both.

30. And of which soever the choice is made, the other being diminished or overcome, magnifieth the act or operation of the other.

31. The choice of the better, therefore, is not only best for him that chooseth it, by deifying man, but it also shewth Piety and Religion towards God.

32. But the choice of the worst destroys a man, but doth nothing against God, save that as *Pomps* or *Pageants*, when they come abroad, cannot do anything themselves but hinder; after the same manner also do these make *Pomps* and *Pageants* in the World, being seduced by the pleasures of the Body.

33. These Things being so, O *Tat*, that things have been, and are so plenteously ministered to us from God, let them proceed also from us, without any scarcity or sparing.

34. For God is innocent or guiltless, but we are the causes of Evil, preferring them before the Good.

35. Thou seest, O Son, how many Bodies we must go beyond, and how many Choirs of *Demons*, and what continuity and courses of Stars, that we may make haste to the One, and only God.

36. For the Good is not to be transcended, it is unbounded and infinite, unto itself, without beginning, but unto us, seeming to have a beginning, even our knowledge of it.

37. For our Knowledge is not the beginning of it, but shews us the beginning of its being known unto us.

38. Let us, therefore, lay hold of the beginning, and we shall quickly go through all things.

39. It is indeed a difficult thing to leave those things that are accustomable and present, and turn us to those things that are ancient, and according to the original.

40. For these things that appear, delight us, but make the things that appear not, hard to believe, *or the things that appear not, are hard to believe.*

41. The things most apparent are Evil, but the Good is secret, or hid in, or to the things that appear, for it hath neither Form nor Figure.

42. For this cause it is like to itself, but unlike everything else, for it is impossible that anything incorporeal should be made know, or appear to a Body.

43. For this is the difference between the like and the unlike, and the unlike wanteth always somewhat of the like.

44. For the Unity, Beginning, and Root of all things, as being the Root and Beginning.

45. Nothing is without a beginning, but the Beginning is of nothing, but of itself, for it is the Beginning of all other things.

46. Therefore it is, seeing it is not from another beginning.

47. Unity therefore being the Beginning, containeth very number, but itself is contained of none, and begetteth every number, itself being begotten of no other number.

48. Everything that is begotten (or made), is imperfect, and may be divided, increased, diminished.

49. But to the perfect, there happeneth none of these.

50. And that which is increased, is increased by Unity, but is consumed and vanished through weakness, being not able to receive the Unity.

51. This Image of God, have I described to thee, *O Tat*, as well as I could, which if thou do diligently consider, and view by the eyes of they Mind, and hear, believe me, Son, thou shalt find the way to things above, or, rather, the Image itself will lead thee.

52. But the spectacle or sight, hath this peculiar and proper: Them that can see, and behold it, it holds fast and draws unto it, as they say, the Loadstone doth Iron.

The End of the Twelfth Book,  
HIS CRATER OR MONAS.

### THE THIRTEENTH BOOK, OF SENSE AND UNDERSTANDING

YESTERDAY, *Asclepius*, I delivered a perfect Discourse, but now I think it necessary, in suite of that, to dispute also of Sense.

2. For Sense and Understanding seem to differ, because the one is material and the other essential.

3. But unto me, they appear to be both one, or united, and not divided in men, I mean.

4. For in other living Creatures, Sense is united into Nature, but in men to Understanding.

5. But the Mind differs from Understanding, as much a God from Divinity.

6. For Divinity is... from under God, and Understanding from the Mind, being the Sister of the Word or Speech, and they the Instruments one of another.

7. For neither is the Word pronounced without Understanding, neither is Understanding manifested without the Word.

8. Therefore, Sense and Understanding do both flow together into a man, as if they were infolded one within another.

9. For neither is it possible without Sense to Understand, nor can we have Sense without Understanding.

10. And yet it is possible (*for the time being*), that the Understanding may understand without Sense, as they that fancy visions in their Dreams.

11. But it seems unto me, that both the operations are in the Visions of Dreams, and that the Sense is stirred up out of sleep, into awakening.

12. For Man is divided into a Body and a Soul, when both parts of the Sense accord one with another, then is the Understanding childed, or brought forth by the Mind pronounced.

13. For the Mind brings forth all Intellections or Understandings, Good ones when it receiveth good seed from God, and the contrary, when it receives them from Devils.

14. For there is not part of the World void of the Devil, which entering in privately, sowed the seed of his own *proper* operation, and the mind did make pregnant, or did bring forth that which was sown. *Adulteries, Murders, Striking of Parents, Sacrileges, Impieties, Stranglings*, throwing down headlong, and all other things, which are the works of Evil Demons.

15. And the seeds of God are few, but great and Fair, and Good, Virtue, and Temperance, and Piety.

16. And the Piety is the knowledge of God, whom whosoever knoweth, being full of all good things, hath Divine Understanding, and not like the many.

17. And therefore they that have that knowledge, neither please the multitude, nor the multitude them, but they seem to be mad, and to move laughter, hated and despised, and many times also murdered.

18. For we have already said, That wickedness must dwell here, being in her own region.

19. For her region is the Earth, and not the World, as some will sometimes say, Blaspheming.

20. But the Godly or God-worshipping Man, laying hold on knowledge, will despise or tread under all these things, for though they be evil to other men, yet to him all things are good.

21. And upon mature consideration, he refers all things to knowledge, and that which is most to be wondered at, he alone makes Evil things good.

22. But I return again to my Discourse of Sense.

23. It is, therefore, a thing proper to man, to communicate and conjoin Sense and Understanding.

24. But every man, as I said before, doth not enjoy Understanding, for one man is material, another Essential.

25. And he that is material with wickedness, as I said, received from the Devils the seed of Understanding, but they that are with the Good essentially, are eared with God.

26. For God is the workman of all things, and when he worketh, he useth Nature.

27. He maketh all things good like himself.

28. But these things that are made good, are in the use of operation, unlawful.

29. For the Motion of the World, stirring up Generations, makes Qualities; infesting some with evilness, and purifying some with good.

30. And the World, *Asclepius*, hath a peculiar Sense and Understanding, not like to Man's, nor so various or manifold, but a better and more simple.

31. For the Sense and Understanding of the World is *One*, in that it makes all things, and unmakes them again into itself, for it is the Organ of Instrument of the Will of God.

32. And it is so organized or framed, and made for an Instrument by God, that receiving all Seeds into itself from God, and keeping them in itself, it maketh all things effectually, and dissolving them, reneweth all things.

33. And therefore like a good Husbandman of Life, when things are dissolved or loosened, he affords, by the casting of Seed, renovation to all things that grow.

34. There is nothing that it (the World) doth not beget or bring forth alive, and by its Motion, it makes all things alive.



35. And it is at once, both the Place and the Workman of Life.

36. But the Bodies are from the Matter, in a different manner, for some are of Earth, some of Water, some of Air, some of Fire, and all are compounded, but some are more compounded, and some are more simple.

37. They that are compounded, are the heavier, and they that are less, are the higher.

38. And the swiftness of the Motion of the World, makes the varieties of the qualities of Generation, for the Spiration of Influence being most frequent, extendeth unto the Bodies' qualities, with infulness, which is of Life.

39. Therefore, God is the Father of the World, but the World is Father of the things in the World.

40. And the World is the Son of God, but things in the World, are the Sons of the World.

41. And, therefore, it is well called ... the World, that is, an Ornament, because it adorneth and beautifieth all things with the Variety of Generation, and indeficiency of Life, which the unweariedness of Operation, and the swiftness of Necessity, with the mingling of Elements, and the order of things done.

42. Therefore, it is necessarily and proper called ... the World.

43. For all living things, both the sense and the Understanding, cometh into them from without, inspired by that which compasseth them about, and continueth them.

44. And the World receiving it once from God as soon as it was made, has it still, *whatever it once had*.

45. But God is not as it seems to some who Blaspheme through superstition, without Sense, and without Mind, or Understanding.

46. For all things that are, O *Asclepius*, are in God, and made by him, and depend of him, some working by bodies, some moving by a Soul,

like Essence, some quickening by a Spirit, and some receiving the things that are weary, and all very fitly.

47. Or rather, I say, that he hath them not, but I declare the Truth, *he is all things*, not receiving them from without, but exhibiting them outwardly.

48. And this is the Sense and Understanding of God, to move all things always.

49. And there shall never be any time, when any of these things that are, shall fail, or be wanting.

50. When I say the things that are, I mean God, for the things that are, God hath, and neither is there anything without him, nor he without anything.

51. These things, O *Asclepius*, will appear to be true, if thou understand them, but if thou understand them not, incredible.

52. For to understand, is to believe, but not to believe, is not to understand; For my speech or words reach not unto the Truth, but the Mind is great, and being led or conducted for a while by Speech, is able to attain to the Truth.

53. And understanding all things round about, and finding them consonant, and agreeable to those things that were delivered, and interrupted by Speech, believeth, and in that good belief resteth.

54. To them, therefore, that understand the things that have been said of God, they are credible, but to them that understand them not, incredible.

55. And let these, and thus many things, be spoken concerning *Understanding* and *Sense*.

The End of the Thirteenth Book,  
OF SENSE AND UNDERSTANDING.

## THE FOURTEENTH BOOK, OF OPERATION AND SENSE

*Tat.*

THOU has well explained these things, Father. Teach me furthermore these things, for thou sayest, that *Science* and *Art* were the operations of the Rational, but now thou sayest, that Beasts are unreasonable, and for want of Reason, both are, and are called Brutes, so that by this reason, it must needs follow, that unreasonable Creatures partake not of Science, or Art, because they come short of Reason.

2. *Herm.* It must needs be so, Son.

3. *Tat.* Why then, O Father, do we see some unreasonable living Creatures use both Science and Art; as the *Pismires* treasure up for themselves food against Winter, and Fowls of the Air likewise make them Nests, and four-footed Beasts know their own Dens?

4. These things they do, O Son, not by Science or Art, but by Nature; For Science and Art are things that are taught, but none of these Brute Beasts are taught any of these things.

5. But these things being Natural unto them, are wrought by Nature, whereas, Art and Science do not happen unto all, but unto some.

6. As Men are Musicians, but not all; neither are all Archers, or Huntsmen, or the rest, but some of them have learned something by the working of Science, or Art.

7. After the same manner also, if some *Pismires* did so, and some not, thou mightest well say, they gather their Food according to Science and Art.

8. But being, they are all led by Nature, to the same thing, even against their Wills, it is manifest they do not do it by Science or Art.

9. For operations, O *Tat*, being unbodily are in Bodies, and work by bodies.

10. Wherefore, O *Tat*, in as much as they are unbodily, thou must needs say, they are immortal.

11. But inasmuch as they cannot act without Bodies, I say they are always in a Body.

12. For those things that are to anything, or for the cause of anything made subject to Providence or Necessity, cannot possibly remain idle of their own proper operation.

13. For that which is, shall ever be, for both the Body, and the Life of it, is the same.

14. And by this reason, it follows, that the Bodies also are always, because I affirm: That this corporeity is always by the Act and Operation, or for them.

15. For although Earthly Bodies be subject to dissolution, yet these bodies must be the Places, and the Organs, and Instruments of Acts or Operations.

16. But acts or Operations are immortal, and that which is Immortal is always in Act, and therefore also *Corporification* if it be always.

17. Acts or operations do follow the Soul, yet come not suddenly or promiscuously; but some of them come together with being made man, being about brutish or unreasonable things.

18. But the purer operations do insensibly in the change of time, work with the oblique part of the Soul.

19. And these operations depend upon Bodies, and truly they that are *Corporifying*, come from the Divine Bodies into Mortal ones.

20. But every one of them acteth both about the Body and the Soul, and are present with the Soul, even without the Body.

21. And they are always Acts or operations, but the Soul is not always in a Mortal Body, for it can be without a Body, but Acts or Operations cannot be without Bodies.

22. This is a sacred Speech, Son; *the Body cannot consist without a Soul.*

23. *Tat.* How meanest thou that, Father?

24. *Herm.* Understand it thus, O *Tat*: When the Soul is separated from the Body, there remaineth that same body.

25. And this same Body, according to the time of its abode, is actuated, or operated in that it is dissolved and becomes invisible.

26. And these things the Body cannot suffer without act or operation, and consequently there remaineth with the Body, the same act or operation.

27. This then is the difference between an Immortal Body and a Mortal one, that the Immortal one consists of one Matter, and so doth not the Mortal one, and the immortal one doth, but this suffereth.

28. And every thing that acteth or operateth is stronger, and ruleth, but that which is actuated or operated, is ruled.

29. And that which ruleth, directeth, and governeth as free, but the other is ruled, a servant.

30. Acts or Operations, do not only act or operate, living or breathing, or insouled ... Bodies, but also Breathless Bodies, or without Souls, Wood and Stones, and such like, encreasing and bearing fruit, ripening, corrupting, rotting, putrifying and breaking, or working such like things, and whatsoever inanimate Bodies can suffer.

31. Act or Operation, O Son, is called, whatsoever is, or is made or done, and there are always many things made, or rather all things.

32. For the World is never widowed or forsaken of any of those things that are, but being always carried or moved in itself, it is in labour to bring forth the things that are, which shall never be left by it to corruption.

33. Let, therefore, every act or operation be understood to be always immortal, in what manner of Body soever it be.

34. But some Acts or Operations be of Divine, some of corruptible bodies, some universal, some peculiar, and some of the generals, and some of the parts of everything.

35. Divine Acts or Operations, therefore, there be, and such as work or operate upon their proper Bodies, and these also are perfect, and being upon or in perfect Bodies.

36. Particular are they which work by any of the living Creatures.

37. Proper be they that work upon any of the things that are.

38. By this Discourse, therefore, O Son, it is gathered that all things are full of Acts or Operations.

39. For if necessarily they be in every Body, and that there be many Bodies in the World, I may very well affirm, that there be many other Acts or Operations.

40. For many items in one Body, there if one, and a second, and a third, besides these universal ones that follow.

41. And universal operations, I call them that are indeed bodily, and are done by the Senses and Motions.

42. For without these, it is impossible that the Body should consist.

43. But other operations are proper to the Souls of Men, by Arts, Sciences, Studies, and Actions.

44. The Senses also follow these Operations, or rather are the effects or perfections ... of them.

45. Understand, therefore, O Son, the difference of Operations, it is sent from above.

46. But Sense being in the Body, and having its essence from it, when it receiveth Act or Operation, manifesteth it, making it as it were corporeal.

47. Therefore, I say, that the Senses are both corporeal and mortal, having so much existence as the Body, for they are born with the Body, and die with it.

48. But mortal things themselves have not Sense, as *not* consisting of such an Essence.

49. For Sense can be of no other than a corporeal apprehension, either of Evil or Good, that comes to the Body.

50. But to External Bodies there is nothing comes, nothing departs, therefore there is no Sense in them.

51. *Tat.* Doth the Sense therefore perceive or apprehend in every Body?

52. *Herm.* In every Body, O Son.

53. *Tat.* And do the Acts or Operations work in all things?

54. *Herm.* Even in things inanimate, O Son, but there are differences of Senses.

55. For the Senses of things rational, are with Reason, of things unreasonable, Corporeal only; but the Senses of things inanimate, are passive only, according to Augmentation and Diminution.

56. But Passion and Sense depend both upon one head, or hight, and are gathered together into the same, by Acts or Operations.

57. But in living Wights, there be two other Operations that follow the Senses and Passions, to wit, *Grief* and *Pleasure*.

58. And without these, it is impossible that a living Wight, especially a reasonable one, should perceive or apprehend.

59. And, therefore, I say, that these are the *Ideas* of Passions that bear rule, especially in reasonable living wights.

60. The Operations work indeed, but the Senses do declare and manifest the operations, and they being bodily, are moved by the brutish parts of the Soul; therefore, I say, they are both malificial, or doers of evil.

61. For that which affords the Sense to rejoice with Pleasure, is strightway the cause of many evils, happening to him that suffers it.

62. But sorrow gives stronger torments and Anguish, therefore, doubtless, are they both malifical.

63. The same may be said of the Sense of the Soul.

64. *Tat.* Is not the soul incorporeal, and the sense a Body, Father? Or is it rather in the Body?

65. *Herm.* If we put it in a Body, O So, we shall make it like the Soul, or the Operations; for these being unbodily, we say are in Bodies.

66. But Sense is neither Operation, nor Soul, nor anything else that belongs to the Body, but as we have said, and, therefore, it is not incorporeal.

67. And if it be not incorporeal, it must needs be a Body, for we always say, that of things that are, some are Bodies, and some incorporeal.

The End of The Fourteenth Book,  
OF OPERATION AND SENSE.

## THE FIFTEENTH BOOK, OF TRUTH TO HIS SON TAT

*Herm.*

OF TRUTH, O *Tat*, it is not possible that man, being an imperfect Wight, compounded of Imperfect members, and having his Tabernacle, consisting of different, and many Bodies, should speak with any Confidence.

2. But as far as it is possible and just (I say). That Truth is only in Eternal Bodies, whose very Bodies are also True.

3. The Fire is fire itself only, and nothing else; the Earth is earth itself, and nothing else; the Air is air itself, and nothing else; the Water, water itself, and nothing else.

4. But our Bodies consist of all these, for they have of the Fire, they have of the Earth, they have of the Water, and Air, and yet there is neither Fire, nor Earth, nor Water, nor Air, nor anything true.



5. And if at the beginning, our Constitution had not Truth, how could men either see the Truth, or speak it, or understand it, only except God would?

6. All things, therefore, upon Earth, O *Tat*, are not Truth, but imitations of the Truth, and yet not all things neither, for they are but few that are so.

7. But the other things are Falsehood and Deceit, O *Tat*, and opinions, like the Images of the fancy of appearance.

8. And when the fancy hath an influence from above, then it is an imitation of Truth, but without the operations from above, it is left a lie.

9. And as an Image shews the Body described, and yet it is not the Body of that which is seen, as it seems to be, and it is seen to have eyes, but it sees nothing, and ears, but it hears nothing at all, and all other things hath the picture, but they are false, deceiving the eyes of the beholder, whilst they think they see the Truth, and yet they are indeed but lies.

10. As many, therefore, as see not falsehood, see the Truth.

11. If, therefore, we do so understand, and see every one of those things as it is, then we see and understand true things.

12. But if we see or understand anything besides, or otherwise, than that which is, we shall neither understand, nor know the Truth.

13. *Tat*. Is Truth, therefore, upon Earth, O Father?

14. *Herm*. Thou dost not miss the mark, O Son; Truth indeed is nowhere at all upon Earth, O *Tat*, for it cannot be generated, or made.

15. But concerning the Truth, it may be that some men, to whom God will give the Good seeing power, may understand it.

16. So that unto the Mind and Reason, there is nothing true indeed upon earth.

17. But unto the true Mind and Reason, all things are fancies, or appearances, and opinions.

18. *Tat.* Must we not, therefore, call it Truth, to understand and speak the things that are?

19. *Herm.* But there is nothing true upon Earth.

20. *Tat.* How then is this true: that we do not know anything true? How can that be done here?

21. *Herm.* O Son, Truth is the most perfect Virtue, and the highest Good itself, not troubled by Matter, not encompassed by a Body, naked, clear, unchangeable, venerable, unalterable Good.

22. But the things that are here, O Son, are visible, incapable of Good, corruptible, passible, dissolvable, changeable, continually altered, and made of another.

23. The things therefore that are not true to themselves, how can they be true?

24. For everything that is altered, is a lie, not abiding in what it is, but being changed it shews us always, other and other appearances.

25. *Tat.* Is not man true, O Father?

26. *Herm.* As far forth as he is a man, he is not true, Son, for that which is true, hath of itself alone its constitution, and remains and abides according to itself, such as it is.

27. But man consists of many things, and doth not abide of himself, but is turned and changed, age after age, *Idea* after *Idea*, or form after form, and this while he is yet in the Tabernacle.

28. And many have not known their own children after a little while, and many children likewise have not known their own Parents.

29. Is it then possible, O *Tat*, that he who is so changed, as is not to be known, should be true? No, on the contrary, he is Falsehood, being in many Appearance of changes.

30. But do thou understand the True to be that which abides the Same, and is Eternal, but man is not ever, therefore not True, but man is a certain appearance, and Appearance is the highest Lie or Falsehood.

31. *Tat*. But these eternal bodies, Father, are they not true, though they be changed?

32. *Herm*. Everything that is begotten, or made, and changed, is not true; but being made by our Progenitor, they might have had true matter.

33. But these also have in themselves, something that is false, in regard to their change.

34. For nothing that remains not in itself, is true.

35. *Tat*. What shall one say then, Father, that only the sun, which besides the Nature of other things, is not changed, but abides in itself, is Truth?

36. *Herm*. It is Truth, and therefore is he only intrusted with the Workmanship of the World, ruling and making all things, whom I do both honour, and adore his Truth; and after the *One*, and First, I acknowledge him the Workman.

37. *Tat*. What, therefore, dost thou affirm to be the first Truth, O Father?

38. *Herm*. The *One* and *Only*, O *Tat*, that is not of Matter, that is not in a Body, that is without colour, without Figure, or Shape, Immutable, Unalterable, which always is, but Falsehood, O Son, is corrupted.

39. And corruption hath laid hold upon all things on Earth, and the Providence of the *True* encompasseth, and will encompass them.

40. For without corruption there can no generation consist.

41. For corruption followeth every generation, that it may again be generated.

42. For those things that are generated, must of necessity be generated of those things that are corrupted, and the things generated must needs be corrupted, that the Generation of things being, may not stand still or cease.

43. Acknowledge, therefore, the first Workman, by the Generation of things.

44. Consequently the things that are generated of Corruption are false, as being sometimes one thing, sometimes another: For it is impossible, they should be made the same things again, and that which is not the same, how is it true?

45. Therefore, O Son, we must call these things fancies or appearances.

46. And if we will give a man his right name, we must call him the appearance of Manhood; and a child, the fancy or appearance of a child; an old man, the fancy or appearance of an old man; a young man, the appearance of a young man; and a man of ripe age, the appearance of a man of ripe age.

47. For neither is a man, a man, nor a child, a child, nor a young man, young man, nor an old man, an old man.

48. But the things that pre-exist, and that are, being changed, are false.

49. These things, understand thus, O Son, as these false operations, having their dependence from above, even of the Truth itself.

50. Which being so, I do affirm, that Falsehood is the Work of the Truth.

The End of the Fifteenth Book, OF TRUTH TO HIS SON TAT.

**THE SIXTEENTH BOOK, THAT NONE OF THE THINGS THAT ARE CAN PERISH**

*Herm.*

WE must now speak of the Soul and body, O Son, after what manner the soul is Immortal, and what operation that is, which constitutes the Body, and dissolves it.

2. But in none of these is Death, for it is a conception of a name, which is either an empty word, or else it is wrongly called Death ..., by taking away the first letter, instead of Immortal ....

3. For Death is destruction, but there is nothing in the whole World that is destroyed.

4. For if the World be a second God, and an Immortal living Wight, it is impossible that any part of an Immortal living Wight should die.

5. But all things that are in the World, are members of the World, especially man, the reasonable living Wight.

6. For the first of all is God, the Eternal, the Unmade, and the Workman of all things.

7. The second is the World, made by him, after his own Image, and by him holden together, and nourished, and immortalized, and as from its own Father, ever living.

8. So that as Immortal, it is ever living, and ever immortal.

9. For that which is ever living, differs from that which is eternal.

10. For the Eternal was not begotten, or made by another, and if it were begotten or made, yet it was made by itself, not by any other, but it is always made.

11. For the Eternal, as it is Eternal, is the Universe.

12. For the Father himself, is Eternal of himself, but the World was made by the Father, ever living, and immortal.

13. And as much Matter as there was laid up by him, the Father made it all into a Body, and swelling it, made it round like a Sphere, endued it with Quality, being itself immortal, and having Eternal Materiality.

14. The Father being full of *Ideas*, sowed qualities in the Spheres, and shut them up as in a Circle, deliberating to beautify with every Quality, that which afterwards should be made.

15. Then clothing the Universal Body with Immortality, lest the Matter, if it would depart from this Composition, should be dissolved into its own disorder.

16. For when the Matter was Incorporated, O Son, it was disordered, and it hath here the same confusion daily revolved about other little things, endued with Qualities, in point of Augmentation, and Diminution, which men call Death, being indeed a disorder happening about earthly living Wights.

17. For the Bodies of Heavenly things, have one order, which they have received from the Father at the beginning, and is by the instauration of each of them, kept indissolveable.

18. But the instauration of earthly Bodies is their consistence, and their dissolution restores them into indissolveable, that is, Immortal.

19. And so there is made a privation of Sense, but not a destruction of Bodies.

20. Now the third living Wight is Man, made after the Image of the World, and having by the will of the Father, an mind above other earthly Wights.

21. And he hath not only a sympathy with the second God, but also an understanding of the first.

22. For the Second God, he apprehends as a Body, but the first, he understands as Incorporeal, and the Mind of the Good.

23. *Tat.* And doth not this living Wight perish?

24. *Herm.* Speak advisedly, O Son, and learn what God is, what the World, what an Immortal Wight, and what a dissolveable one is.

25. And understand that the World is of God, and in God, but Man of the World, and in the World.

26. The Beginning, and End, and Consistence of all, is God.

The End of the Sixteenth Book,  
THAT NONE OF THE THINGS THAT ARE CAN PERISH.

### THE SEVENTEENTH BOOK, TO ASCLEPIUS, TO BE TRULY WISE

BECAUSE, my Son, *Tat*, in thy absence, would needs learn the Nature of the things that are, he would not suffer me to give over (as coming very young to the knowledge of every individual), till I was forced to discourse to him many things at large, that his contemplation might, from point to point, be more easy and successful.

2. But to thee, I have thought good to write in few words, choosing out the principal heads of the things then spoken, and to interpret them more mystically, because thou hast both more years, and more knowledge of Nature.

3. All things that appear, were made, and are made.

4. Those things that are made, are not made by themselves, but by another.

5. And there are many things made, but especially all things that appear, and which are different, and not like.

6. If the things that be made and done, be made and done by another, there must be one that must make, and do them, and he, unmade, and more ancient than the things that are made.

7. For I affirm the things that are made, to be made by another, and it is impossible, that of the things that are made, any should be more ancient than all, but only that which is not made.

8. He is stronger, and one, and only knowing all things indeed, as not having anything more ancient than himself.

9. For he bears rule, both over multitude and greatness, and the diversity of the things that are made, and the continuity of the Facture, and of the Operation.

10. Moreover, the things that are made, are visible, but he is invisible, and for this cause, he maketh them, that he may be visible, and therefore he makes them always.

11. Thus, it is fit to understand, and understanding to admire, and admiring to think thyself happy, that knowest thy natural Father.

12. For what is sweeter than a natural Father?

13. Who, therefore, is this, or how shall we know him?

14. Or is it just to ascribe unto him alone, the Title and Appellation of God, or of the Maker or of the Father, or all Three? That of God because of his Power; the Maker, because of his Working and Operation; and the Father because of his Goodness.

15. For Power is different from the things that are made, but Act or Operation in that all things are made.

16. Wherefore, letting go all much and vain talking, we must understand these two things: *That which is made*, and *him which is the Maker*; for there is nothing in the Middle, between these Two, nor is there any third.

17. Therefore, understanding All things, remember these Two; and think that these are All things, putting nothing into doubt; neither of the things above, nor of the things below; neither of things changeable, nor things that are in darkness or secret.

18. For All things, are but Two things, *That which maketh*, and *that which is made*; and the One of them cannot depart, or be divided from the other.

19. For neither is it possible that the Maker should be without the thing made, for either of them is the self-same thing; therefore cannot the one of them be separated from the other, no more than a thing can be separated from itself.

20. For if he that makes be nothing else but that which makes alone, *simple, uncompounded*, it is of necessity, that he makes the same thing to



himself, to whom it is the Generation of him that maketh to be also All that is made.

21. For that which is Generated or made, must necessarily be generated or made by another, but without the maker, that which is made, neither is made, nor is; for the one of them without the other, has lost his proper Nature by the privation of the other.

22. So if these Two be confessed, That which maketh, and that which is made, then they are One in Union, this going before, and that following.

23. And that which goeth before, is, God the Maker; and that which follows, is, that which is made, be it what it will.

24. And let no man be afraid because of the variety of things that are made or done, lest he should case an aspersion of baseness, or infamy upon God; for it is the only Glory of him to do, or make all things.

25. And this making, or Facture, is as it were the Body of God; and to him that maketh, or doth, there is nothing evil or filthy to be imputed, or *there is nothing thought evil, or filthy.*

26. For these are Passions that follow Generation, as Rust doth Copper, or as Excrements do the Body.

27. But neither did the Coppersmith make the Rust, nor the Maker of the Filth, nor God the Evilness.

28. But the vicissitude of Generation doth make them, as it were, to blossom out; and for this cause did make change to be, as one should say, The Purgation of Generation.

29. Moreover, is it lawful for the same Painter to make both Heaven, and the Gods, and the Earth, and the Sea, and Men, and brute Beasts, and inanimate things, and Trees; and is it impossible for God to make these things? O the great madness, and ignorance of men in things that concern God!

30. For men that think so, suffer that which is most ridiculous of all; for professing to bless, and praise God, yet in not ascribing to him the making or doing of All things, they know him now.

31. And besides their not knowing him, they are extremely impious against him, attributing unto him Passions, as *Pride*, or *Oversight*, or *Weakness*, or *Ignorance*, or *Envy*.

32. For if he do not make, or do all things, he is either proud, or not able, or ignorant, or envious, which is impious to affirm.

33. For god hath only one Passion, namely, *Good*; and he that is good, is neither proud, nor impotent, nor the rest, but God is *Good* itself.

34. For *Good* is all *Power*, to do or make all things, and everything that is made, is made by God, that is, by the *Good*, and that can make or do all things.

35. See, then, how he maketh all things, and how the things are done, that are done, and if thou wilt learn, thou mayest see an Image thereof, very beautiful and like.

36. Look upon the Husbandman, how he casteth seeds into the Earth, here wheat, there barley, and elsewhere some other seeds.

37. Look upon the same Man, planting a vine, or an apple tree, or a fig tree, or some other tree.

38. So doth God in Heaven sow Immortality in the Earth, Change in the whole Life and Motion.

39. And these things are not many, but few, and easily numbered; for they are all but four, God and Generation, in which are all things.

The End of the Seventeenth Book,  
TO ASCLEPIUS, TO BE TRULY WISE.  
(End of the Divine Pymander--1650)

## 'The Secret Teachings of All Ages'

*The Secret Teachings of All Ages, By Manly P. Hall,  
Philosophical Publishing Society, 1928*

## The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies Which Have Influenced Modern Masonic Symbolism

WHEN confronted with a problem involving the use of the reasoning faculties, individuals of strong intellect keep their poise, and seek to reach a solution by obtaining facts bearing upon the question. Those of immature mentality, on the other hand, when similarly confronted, are overwhelmed. While the former may be qualified to solve the riddle of their own destiny, the latter must be led like a flock of sheep and taught in simple language. They depend almost entirely upon the ministrations of the shepherd. The Apostle Paul said that these little ones must be fed with milk, but that meat is the food of strong men. Thoughtlessness is almost synonymous with childishness, while thoughtfulness is symbolic of maturity.

There are, however, but few mature minds in the world; and thus it was that the philosophic-religious doctrines of the pagans were divided to meet the needs of these two fundamental groups of human intellect--one philosophic, the other incapable of appreciating the deeper mysteries of life. To the discerning few were revealed the *esoteric*, or spiritual, teachings, while the unqualified many received only the literal, or *exoteric*, interpretations. In order to make simple the great truths of Nature and the abstract principles of natural law, the vital forces of the universe were personified, becoming the gods and goddesses of the ancient mythologies. While the ignorant multitudes brought their offerings to the altars of Priapus and Pan (deities representing the procreative energies), the wise recognized in these marble statues only symbolic concretions of great abstract truths.

In all cities of the ancient world were temples for public worship and offering. In every community also were philosophers and mystics, deeply versed in Nature's lore. These individuals were usually banded together, forming seclusive philosophic and religious schools. The more important of these groups were known as the *Mysteries*. Many of the great minds of antiquity were initiated into these secret fraternities by strange and mysterious rites, some of which were extremely cruel. Alexander Wilder defines the Mysteries as "Sacred dramas performed at stated periods. The most celebrated were those of Isis, Sabazius, Cybele, and Eleusis." After being admitted, the initiates were instructed in the

secret wisdom which had been preserved for ages. Plato, an initiate of one of these sacred orders, was severely criticized because in his writings he revealed to the public many of the secret philosophic principles of the Mysteries.

Every pagan nation had (and has) not only its state religion, but another into which the philosophic elect alone have gained entrance. Many of these ancient cults vanished from the earth without revealing their secrets, but a few have survived the test of ages and their mysterious symbols are still preserved. Much of the ritualism of Freemasonry is based on the trials to which candidates were subjected by the ancient hierophants before the keys of wisdom were entrusted to them.

Few realize the extent to which the ancient secret schools influenced contemporary intellects and, through those minds, posterity. Robert Macoy, 33°, in his *General History of Freemasonry*, pays a magnificent tribute to the part played by the ancient Mysteries in the rearing of the edifice of human culture. He says, in part: "It appears that all the perfection of civilization, and all the advancement made in philosophy, science, and art among the ancients are due to those institutions which, under the veil of mystery, sought to illustrate the sublimest truths of religion, morality, and virtue, and impress them on the hearts of their disciples.\* \* \* Their chief object was to teach the doctrine of one God, the resurrection of man to eternal life, the dignity of the human soul, and to lead the people to see the shadow of the deity, in the beauty, magnificence, and splendor of the universe."

With the decline of virtue, which has preceded the destruction of every nation of history, the Mysteries became perverted. Sorcery took the place of the divine magic. Indescribable practices (such as the Bacchanalia) were introduced, and perversion ruled supreme; for no institution can be any better than the members of which it is composed. In despair, the few who were true sought to preserve the secret doctrines from oblivion. In some cases they succeeded, but more often the arcanum was lost and only the empty shell of the Mysteries remained.

Thomas Taylor has written, "Man is naturally a religious animal." From the earliest dawning of his consciousness, man has worshiped and revered *things* as symbolic of the invisible, omnipresent, indescribable *Thing*, concerning which he could discover practically nothing. The pagan Mysteries opposed the Christians during the early centuries of

their church, declaring that the new faith (Christianity) did not demand virtue and integrity as requisites for salvation. Celsus expressed himself on the subject in the following caustic terms:

"That I do not, however, accuse the Christians more bitterly than truth compels, may be conjectured from hence, that the cryers who call men to other mysteries proclaim as follows: 'Let him approach whose hands are pure, and whose words are wise.' And again, others proclaim: 'Let him approach who is pure from all wickedness, whose soul is not conscious of any evil, and who leads a just and upright life.' And these things are proclaimed by those who promise a purification from error. Let us now hear who those are that are called to the Christian mysteries: Whoever is a sinner, whoever is unwise, whoever is a fool, and whoever, in short, is miserable, him the kingdom of God will receive. Do you not, therefore, call a sinner, an unjust man, a thief, a housebreaker, a wizard, one who is sacrilegious, and a robber of sepulchres? What other persons would the cryer nominate, who should call robbers together?"

It was not the true faith of the early Christian mystics that Celsus attacked, but the false forms that were creeping in even during his day. The ideals of early Christianity were based upon the high moral standards of the pagan Mysteries, and the first Christians who met under the city of Rome used as their places of worship the subterranean temples of Mithras, from whose cult has been borrowed much of the sacerdotalism of the modern church.

The ancient philosophers believed that no man could live intelligently who did not have a fundamental knowledge of Nature and her laws. Before man can obey, he must understand, and the Mysteries were devoted to instructing man concerning the operation of divine law in the terrestrial sphere. Few of the early cults actually worshiped anthropomorphic deities, although their symbolism might lead one to believe they did. They were moralistic rather than religionistic; philosophic rather than theologic. They taught man to use his faculties more intelligently, to be patient in the face of adversity, to be courageous when confronted by danger, to be true in the midst of temptation, and, most of all, to view a worthy life as the most acceptable sacrifice to God, and his body as an altar sacred to the Deity.

Sun worship played an important part in nearly all the early pagan Mysteries. This indicates the probability of their Atlantean origin, for

the people of Atlantis were sun worshipers. The Solar Deity was usually personified as a beautiful youth, with long golden hair to symbolize the rays of the sun. This golden Sun God was slain by wicked ruffians, who personified the evil principle of the universe. By means of certain rituals and ceremonies, symbolic of purification and regeneration, this wonderful God of Good was brought back to life and became the Savior of His people. The secret processes whereby He was resurrected symbolized those cultures by means of which man is able to overcome his lower nature, master his appetites, and give expression to the higher side of himself. The Mysteries were organized for the purpose of assisting the struggling human creature to reawaken the spiritual powers which, surrounded by the flaming



A FEMALE HIEROPHANT OF THE MYSTERIES.

From Montfaucon's *Antiquities*.

This illustration shows Cybele, here called the Syrian Goddess, in the robes of a hierophant. Montfaucon describes the figure as follows: "Upon her head is an episcopal mitre, adorned on the lower part with towers and pinnacles; over the gate of the city is a crescent, and beneath the circuit of the walls a crown of rays. The Goddess wears a sort of surplice, exactly like the surplice of a priest or bishop; and upon the surplice a tunic, which falls down to the legs; and over all an episcopal cope, with the twelve signs of the Zodiac wrought on the borders. The figure hath a lion on each side, and holds in its left hand a Tympanum, a Sistrum, a Distaff, a Caduceus, and another instrument. In her right hand she holds with her middle finger a thunderbolt, and upon the same arm animals, insects, and, as far as we may guess, flowers, fruit, a bow, a quiver, a torch, and a scythe." The whereabouts of the statue is unknown, the copy reproduced by Montfaucon being from drawings by Pirro Ligorio.

ring of lust and degeneracy, lay asleep within his soul. In other words, man was offered a way by which he could regain his lost estate. (See Wagner's *Siegfried*.)

In the ancient world, nearly all the secret societies were philosophic and religious. During the mediæval centuries, they were chiefly religious and political, although a few philosophic schools remained. In modern times, secret societies, in the Occidental countries, are largely political or fraternal, although in a few of them, as in Masonry, the ancient religious and philosophic principles still survive.

Space prohibits a detailed discussion of the secret schools. There were literally scores of these ancient cults, with branches in all parts of the Eastern and Western worlds. Some, such as those of Pythagoras and the Hermetists, show a decided Oriental influence, while the Rosicrucians, according to their own proclamations, gained much of their wisdom from Arabian mystics. Although the Mystery schools are usually associated with civilization, there is evidence that the most uncivilized peoples of prehistoric times had a knowledge of them. Natives of distant islands, many in the lowest forms of savagery, have mystic rituals and secret practices which, although primitive, are of a decided Masonic tinge.

### THE DRUIDIC MYSTERIES OF BRITAIN AND GAUL

"The original and primitive inhabitants of Britain, at some remote period, revived and reformed their national institutes. Their priest, or instructor, had hitherto been simply named Gwydd, but it was considered to have become necessary to divide this office between the national, or superior, priest and another whose influence [would] be more limited. From henceforth the former became Der-Wydd (Druid), or superior instructor, and [the latter] Go-Wydd, or O-Vydd (Ovate), subordinate instructor; and both went by the general name of Beirdd (Bards), or teachers of wisdom. As the system matured and augmented, the Bardic Order consisted of three classes, the Druids, Beirdd Braint, or privileged Bards, and Ovates." (See Samuel Meyrick and Charles Smith, *The Costume of The Original Inhabitants of The British Islands*.)

The origin of the word *Druid* is under dispute. Max Müller believes that, like the Irish word *Druí*, it means "the men of the oak trees." He further draws attention to the fact that the forest gods and tree deities of the Greeks were called *dryades*. Some believe the word to be of Teutonic

origin; others ascribe it to the Welsh. A few trace it to the Gaelic *druidh*, which means "a wise man" or "a sorcerer." In Sanskrit the word *dru* means "timber."

At the time of the Roman conquest, the Druids were thoroughly ensconced in Britain and Gaul. Their power over the people was unquestioned, and there were instances in which armies, about to attack each other, sheathed their swords when ordered to do so by the white-robed Druids. No undertaking of great importance was scatted without the assistance of these patriarchs, who stood as mediators between the gods and men. The Druidic Order is deservedly credited with having had a deep understanding of Nature and her laws. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* states that geography, physical science, natural theology, and astrology were their favorite studies. The Druids had a fundamental knowledge of medicine, especially the use of herbs and *simples*. Crude surgical instruments also have been found in England and Ireland. An odd treatise on early British medicine states that every practitioner was expected to have a garden or back yard for the growing of certain herbs necessary to his profession. Eliphas Levi, the celebrated transcendentalist, makes the following significant statement:

"The Druids were priests and physicians, curing by magnetism and charging amulets with their fluidic influence. Their universal remedies were mistletoe and serpents' eggs, because these substances attract the astral light in a special manner. The solemnity with which mistletoe was cut down drew upon this plant the popular confidence and rendered it powerfully magnetic. \* \* \* The progress of magnetism will some day reveal to us the absorbing properties of mistletoe. We shall then understand the secret of those spongy growths which drew the unused virtues of plants and become surcharged with tinctures and savors. Mushrooms, truffles, gall on trees, and the different kinds of mistletoe will be employed with understanding by a medical science, which will be new because it is old \* \* \* but one must not move quicker than science, which recedes that it may advance the further." (See *The History of Magic*.)

Not only was the mistletoe sacred as symbolic of the universal medicine, or panacea, but also because of the fact that it grew upon the oak tree. Through the symbol of the oak, the Druids worshiped the Supreme Deity; therefore, anything growing upon that tree was sacred to Him. At certain seasons, according to the positions of the sun, moon, and stars, the Arch-Druid climbed the oak tree and cut the mistletoe with a golden sickle consecrated for that service. The parasitic growth



was caught in white cloths provided for the purpose, lest it touch the earth and be polluted by terrestrial vibrations. Usually a sacrifice of a white bull was made under the tree.

The Druids were initiates of a secret school that existed in their midst. This school, which closely resembled the Bacchic and Eleusinian Mysteries of Greece or the Egyptian rites of Isis and Osiris, is justly designated the *Druidic Mysteries*. There has been much speculation concerning the secret wisdom that the Druids claimed to possess. Their secret teachings were never written, but were communicated orally to specially prepared candidates. Robert Brown, 32<sup>d</sup>, is of the opinion that the British priests secured their information from Tyrian and Phœnician navigators who, thousands of years before the Christian Era, established colonies in Britain and Gaul while searching for tin. Thomas Maurice, in his *Indian Antiquities*, discourses at length on Phœnician, Carthaginian, and Greek expeditions to the British Isles for the purpose of procuring tin. Others are of the opinion that the Mysteries as celebrated by the Druids were of Oriental origin, possibly Buddhistic.

The proximity of the British Isles to the lost Atlantis may account for the sun worship which plays an important part in the rituals of Druidism. According to Artemidorus, Ceres and Persephone were worshiped on an island close to Britain with rites and ceremonies similar to those of Samothrace. There is no doubt that the Druidic Pantheon includes a large number of Greek and Roman deities. This greatly amazed Cæsar during his conquest of Britain and Gaul, and caused him to affirm that these tribes adored Mercury, Apollo, Mars, and Jupiter, in a manner similar to that of the Latin countries. It is almost certain that the Druidic Mysteries were not indigenous to Britain or Gaul, but migrated from one of the more ancient civilizations.

The school of the Druids was divided into three distinct parts, and the secret teachings embodied therein are practically the same as the mysteries concealed under the allegories of Blue Lodge Masonry. The lowest of the three divisions was that of Ovate (Ovydd). This was an honorary degree, requiring no special purification or preparation. The Ovates dressed in green, the Druidic color of learning, and were expected to know something about medicine, astronomy, poetry if possible, and sometimes music. An Ovate was an individual admitted to the Druidic Order because of his general excellence and superior knowledge concerning the problems of life.

The second division was that of Bard (Beirdd). Its members were robed in sky-blue, to represent harmony and truth, and to them was assigned the labor of memorizing, at least in part, the twenty thousand verses of Druidic sacred poetry. They were often pictured with the primitive British or Irish harp--an instrument strung with human hair, and having as many strings as there were ribs on one side of the human body. These Bards were often chosen as teachers of candidates seeking entrance into the Druidic Mysteries. Neophytes wore striped robes of blue, green, and white, these being the three sacred colors of the Druidic Order.

The third division was that of Druid (Derwyddon). Its particular labor was to minister to the religious needs of the people. To reach this dignity, the candidate must first become a Bard Braint. The Druids always dressed in white--symbolic of their purity, and the color used by them to symbolize the sun.

In order to reach the exalted position of *Arch-Druid*, or spiritual head of the organization, it was necessary for a priest to pass through the six successive degrees of the Druidic Order. (The members of the different degrees were differentiated by the colors of their sashes, for all of them wore robes of white.) Some writers are of the opinion that the title of *Arch-Druid* was hereditary, descending from father to son, but it is more probable that the honor was conferred by ballot election. Its recipient was chosen for his virtues and



THE ARCH-DRUID IN HIS CEREMONIAL ROBES.

From Wellcome's *Ancient Cymric Medicine*.

The most striking adornment of the Arch-Druid was the *iodhan moran*, or breastplate of judgment, which possessed the mysterious Power of strangling any who made an untrue statement while wearing it. Godfrey Higgins states that this breastplate was put on the necks of witnesses to test the veracity of their

evidence. The Druidic *tiara*, or *anguinum*, its front embossed with a number of points to represent the sun's rays, indicated that the priest was a personification of the rising sun. On the front of his belt the Arch-Druid wore the *liath meisicith*--a magic brooch, or buckle in the center of which was a large white stone. To this was attributed the power of drawing the fire of the gods down from heaven at the priest's command. This specially cut stone was a burning glass, by which the sun's rays were concentrated to light the altar fires. The Druids also had other symbolic implements, such as the peculiarly shaped golden sickle with which they cut the mistletoe from the oak, and the *cornan*, or scepter, in the form of a crescent, symbolic of the sixth day of the increasing moon and also of the Ark of Noah. An early initiate of the Druidic Mysteries related that admission to their midnight ceremony was gained by means of a glass boat, called *Cwrtwg Gwydrin*. This boat symbolized the moon, which, floating upon the waters of eternity, preserved the seeds of living creatures within its boatlike crescent.

integrity from the most learned members of the higher Druidic degrees.

According to James Gardner, there were usually two *Arch-Druids* in Britain, one residing on the Isle of Anglesea and the other on the Isle of Man. Presumably there were others in Gaul. These dignitaries generally carried golden scepters and were crowned with wreaths of oak leaves, symbolic of their authority. The younger members of the Druidic Order were clean-shaven and modestly dressed, but the more aged had long gray beards and wore magnificent golden ornaments. The educational system of the Druids in Britain was superior to that of their colleagues on the Continent, and consequently many of the Gallic youths were sent to the Druidic colleges in Britain for their philosophical instruction and training.

Eliphas Levi states that the Druids lived in strict abstinence, studied the natural sciences, preserved the deepest secrecy, and admitted new members only after long probationary periods. Many of the priests of the order lived in buildings not unlike the monasteries of the modern world. They were associated in groups like ascetics of the Far East. Although celibacy was not demanded of them, few married. Many of the Druids retired from the world and lived as recluses in caves, in rough-stone houses, or in little shacks built in the depths of a forest. Here they prayed and medicated, emerging only to perform their religious duties.

James Freeman Clarke, in his *Ten Great Religions*, describes the beliefs of the Druids as follows: "The Druids believed in three worlds and in transmigration from one to the other: In a world above this, in which happiness predominated; a world below, of misery; and this present

state. This transmigration was to punish and reward and also to purify the soul. In the present world, said they, Good and Evil are so exactly balanced that man has the utmost freedom and is able to choose or reject either. The Welsh Triads tell us there are three objects of metempsychosis: to collect into the soul the properties of all being, to acquire a knowledge of all things, and to get power to conquer evil. There are also, they say, three kinds of knowledge: knowledge of the nature of each thing, of its cause, and its influence. There are three things which continually grow less: darkness, falsehood, and death. There are three which constantly increase: light, life, and truth."

Like nearly all schools of the Mysteries, the teachings of the Druids were divided into two distinct sections. The simpler, a moral code, was taught to all the people, while the deeper, esoteric doctrine was given only to initiated priests. To be admitted to the order, a candidate was required to be of good family and of high moral character. No important secrets were intrusted to him until he had been tempted in many ways and his strength of character severely tried. The Druids taught the people of Britain and Gaul concerning the immortality of the soul. They believed in transmigration and apparently in reincarnation. They borrowed in one life, promising to pay back in the next. They believed in a purgatorial type of hell where they would be purged of their sins, afterward passing on to the happiness of unity with the gods. The Druids taught that all men would be saved, but that some must return to earth many times to learn the lessons of human life and to overcome the inherent evil of their own natures.

Before a candidate was intrusted with the secret doctrines of the Druids, he was bound with a vow of secrecy. These doctrines were imparted only in the depths of forests and in the darkness of caves. In these places, far from the haunts of men, the neophyte was instructed concerning the creation of the universe, the personalities of the gods, the laws of Nature, the secrets of occult medicine, the mysteries of the celestial bodies, and the rudiments of magic and sorcery. The Druids had a great number of feast days. The new and full moon and the sixth day of the moon were sacred periods. It is believed that initiations took place only at the two solstices and the two equinoxes. At dawn of the 25th day of December, the birth of the Sun God was celebrated.

The secret teachings of the Druids are said by some to be tinged with Pythagorean philosophy. The Druids had a Madonna, or Virgin Mother, with a Child in her arms, who was sacred to their Mysteries; and their

Sun God was resurrected at the time of the year corresponding to that at which modern Christians celebrate Easter.

Both the cross and the serpent were sacred to the Druids, who made the former by cutting off all the branches of an oak tree and fastening one of them to the main trunk in the form of the letter T. This oaken cross became symbolic of their superior Deity. They also worshiped the sun, moon, and stars. The moon received their special veneration. Caesar stated that Mercury was one of the chief deities of the Gauls. The Druids are believed to have worshiped Mercury under the similitude of a stone cube. They also had great veneration for the Nature spirits (fairies, gnomes, and undines), little creatures of the forests and rivers to whom many offerings were made. Describing the temples of the Druids, Charles Heckethorn, in *The Secret Societies of All Ages & Countries*, says:

"Their temples wherein the sacred fire was preserved were generally situate on eminences and in dense groves of oak, and assumed various forms--circular, because a circle was the emblem of the universe; oval, in allusion to the mundane egg, from which issued, according to the traditions of many nations, the universe, or, according to others, our first parents; serpentine, because a serpent was the symbol of Hu, the Druidic Osiris; cruciform, because a cross is an emblem of regeneration; or winged, to represent the motion of the Divine Spirit. \* \* \* Their chief deities were reducible to two--a male and a female, the great father and mother--Hu and Ceridwen, distinguished by the same characteristics as belong to Osiris and Isis, Bacchus and Ceres, or any other supreme god and goddess representing the two principles of all Being."

Godfrey Higgins states that *Hu*, the Mighty, regarded as the first settler of Britain, came from a place which the Welsh *Triads* call the Summer Country, the present site of Constantinople. Albert Pike says that the Lost Word of Masonry is concealed in the name of the Druid god *Hu*. The meager information extant concerning the secret initiations of the Druids indicates a decided similarity between their Mystery school and the schools of Greece and Egypt. *Hu*, the Sun God, was murdered and, after a number of strange ordeals and mystic rituals, was restored to life.

There were three degrees of the Druidic Mysteries, but few successfully passed them all. The candidate was buried in a coffin, as symbolic of the death of the Sun God. The supreme test, however, was being sent out to sea in an open boat. While undergoing this ordeal, many lost their lives.

Taliesin, an ancient scholar, who passed through the Mysteries, describes the initiation of the open boat in Faber's *Pagan Idolatry*. The few who passed this third degree were said to have been "born again," and were instructed in the secret and hidden truths which the Druid priests had preserved from antiquity. From these initiates were chosen many of the dignitaries of the British religious and political world. (For further details, see Faber's *Pagan Idolatry*, Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*, and Godfrey Higgins' *Celtic Druids*.)

## THE RITES OF MITHRAS

When the Persian Mysteries immigrated into Southern Europe, they were quickly assimilated by the Latin mind. The cult grew rapidly, especially among the Roman soldiery, and during the Roman wars of conquest the teachings were carried by the legionaries to nearly all parts of Europe. So powerful did the cult of Mithras become that at least one Roman Emperor was initiated into the order, which met in caverns under the city of Rome. Concerning the spread of this Mystery school through different parts of Europe, C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Remains*, says:

"Mithraic bas-reliefs cut on the faces of rocks or on stone tablets still abound in the countries formerly the western provinces of the Roman Empire; many exist in Germany, still more in France, and in this island (Britain) they have often been discovered on the line of the Picts' Wall and the noted one at Bath."

Alexander Wilder, in his *Philosophy and Ethics of the Zoroasters*, states that *Mithras* is the Zend title for the sun, and he is supposed to dwell within that shining orb. Mithras has a male and a female aspect, though not himself androgynous. As Mithras, he is the ford of the sun, powerful and radiant, and most magnificent of the *Yazatas* (Izads, or Genii, of the sun). As *Mithra*, this deity represents the feminine principle; the mundane universe is recognized as her symbol. She represents Nature as receptive and terrestrial, and as fruitful only when bathed in the glory of the solar orb. The Mithraic cult is a simplification of the more elaborate teachings of Zarathustra (Zoroaster), the Persian fire magician.



THE GROUND PLAN OF STONEHENGE.

From Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*.

The Druid temples of places of religious worship were not patterned after those of other nations. Most of their ceremonies were performed at night, either in thick groves of oak trees or around open-air altars built of great uncut stones. How these masses of rock were moved has not been satisfactorily explained. The most famous of their altars, a great stone ring of rocks, is Stonehenge, in Southwestern England. This structure, laid out on an astronomical basis, still stands, a wonder of antiquity.

According to the Persians, there coexisted in eternity two principles. The first of these, *Ahura-Mazda*, or *Ormuzd*, was the Spirit of Good. From Ormuzd came forth a number of hierarchies of good and beautiful spirits (angels and archangels). The second of these eternally existing principles was called *Ahriman*. He was also a pure and beautiful spirit, but he later rebelled against Ormuzd, being jealous of his power. This did not occur, however, until after Ormuzd had created light, for previously Ahriman had not been conscious of the existence of Ormuzd. Because of his jealousy and rebellion, Ahriman became the Spirit of Evil. From himself he individualized a host of destructive creatures to injure Ormuzd.

When Ormuzd created the earth, Ahriman entered into its grosser elements. Whenever Ormuzd did a good deed, Ahriman placed the principle of evil within it. At last when Ormuzd created the human race, Ahriman became incarnate in the lower nature of man so that in each personality the Spirit of Good and the Spirit of Evil struggle for control. For 3,000 years Ormuzd ruled the celestial worlds with light and goodness. Then he created man. For another 3,000 years he ruled man with wisdom, and integrity. Then the power of Ahriman began, and the struggle for the soul of man continues through the next period of 3,000 years. During the fourth period of 3,000 years, the power of Ahriman will be destroyed. Good will return to the world again, evil and death will be vanquished, and at last the Spirit of Evil will bow humbly before

the throne of Ormuzd. While Ormuzd and Ahriman are struggling for control of the human soul and for supremacy in Nature, Mithras, God of Intelligence, stands as mediator between the two. Many authors have noted the similarity between mercury and Mithras. As the chemical mercury acts as a solvent (according to alchemists), so Mithras seeks to harmonize the two celestial opposites.

There are many points of resemblance between Christianity and the cult of Mithras. One of the reasons for this probably is that the Persian mystics invaded Italy during the first century after Christ and the early history of both cults was closely interwoven. The Encyclopædia Britannica makes the following statement concerning the Mithraic and Christian Mysteries:

"The fraternal and democratic spirit of the first communities, and their humble origin; the identification of the object of adoration with light and the sun; the legends of the shepherds with their gifts and adoration, the flood, and the ark; the representation in art of the fiery chariot, the drawing of water from the rock; the use of bell and candle, holy water and the communion; the sanctification of Sunday and of the 25th of December; the insistence on moral conduct, the emphasis placed on abstinence and self-control; the doctrine of heaven and hell, of primitive revelation, of the mediation of the Logos emanating from the divine, the atoning sacrifice, the constant warfare between good and evil and the final triumph of the former, the immortality of the soul, the last judgment, the resurrection of the flesh and the fiery destruction of the universe--[these] are some of the resemblances which, whether real or only apparent, enabled Mithraism to prolong its resistance to Christianity,"

The rites of Mithras were performed in caves. Porphyry, in his *Cave of the Nymphs*, states that Zarathustra (Zoroaster) was the first to consecrate a cave to the worship of God, because a cavern was symbolic of the earth, or the lower world of darkness. John P. Lundy, in his *Monumental Christianity*, describes the cave of Mithras as follows:

"But this cave was adorned with the signs of the zodiac, Cancer and Capricorn. The summer and winter solstices were chiefly conspicuous, as the gates of souls descending into this life, or passing out of it in their ascent to the Gods; Cancer being the gate of descent, and Capricorn of ascent. These are the two avenues of the immortals passing up and down from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth."



The so-called chair of St. Peter, in Rome, was believed to have been used in one of the pagan Mysteries, possibly that of Mithras, in whose subterranean grottoes the votaries of the Christian Mysteries met in the early days of their faith. In *Anacalypsis*, Godfrey Higgins writes that in 1662, while cleaning this sacred chair of Bar-Jonas, the Twelve Labors of Hercules were discovered upon it, and that later the French discovered upon the same chair the Mohammedan confession of faith, written in Arabic.

Initiation into the rites of Mithras, like initiation into many other ancient schools of philosophy, apparently consisted of three important degrees. Preparation for these degrees consisted of self-purification, the building up of the intellectual powers, and the control of the animal nature. In the first degree the candidate was given a crown upon the point of a sword and instructed in the mysteries of Mithras' hidden power. Probably he was taught that the golden crown represented his own spiritual nature, which must be objectified and unfolded before he could truly glorify Mithras; for Mithras was his own soul, standing as mediator between Ormuzd, his spirit, and Ahriman, his animal nature. In the second degree he was given the armor of intelligence and purity and sent into the darkness of subterranean pits to fight the beasts of lust, passion, and degeneracy. In the third degree he was given a cape, upon which were drawn or woven the signs of the zodiac and other astronomical symbols. After his initiations were over, he was hailed as one who had risen from the dead, was instructed in the secret teachings of the Persian mystics, and became a full-fledged member of the order. Candidates who successfully passed the Mithraic initiations were called *Lions* and were marked upon their foreheads with the Egyptian cross. Mithras himself is often pictured with the head of a lion and two pairs of wings. Throughout the entire ritual were repeated references to the birth of Mithras as the Sun God, his sacrifice for man, his death that men might have eternal life, and lastly, his resurrection and the saving of all humanity by his intercession before the throne of Ormuzd. (See Heckethorn.)

While the cult of Mithras did not reach the philosophic heights attained by Zarathustra, its effect upon the civilization of the Western world was far-reaching, for at one time nearly all Europe was converted to its doctrines. Rome, in her intercourse with other nations, inoculated them with her religious principles; and many later institutions have exhibited Mithraic culture. The reference to the "Lion" and the "Grip of the Lion's Paw" in the Master Mason's degree have a strong Mithraic tinge and may easily have originated from this cult. A ladder of seven rungs

appears in the Mithraic initiation. Faber is of the opinion that this ladder was originally a pyramid of seven steps. It is possible that the Masonic ladder with seven rungs had its origin in this Mithraic symbol. Women were never permitted to enter the Mithraic Order, but children of the male sex were initiates long before they reached maturity. The refusal to permit women to join the Masonic Order may be based on the esoteric reason given in the secret instructions of the Mithraics. This cult is another excellent example of those secret societies whose legends are largely symbolic representations of the sun and his journey through the houses of the heavens. Mithras, rising from a stone, is merely the sun rising over the horizon, or, as the ancients supposed, out of the horizon, at the vernal equinox.

John O'Neill disputes the theory that Mithras was intended as a solar deity. In *The Night of the Gods* he writes: "The Avestan Mithra, the yazata of light, has '10,000 eyes, high, with full knowledge (perethuvaedayana), strong, sleepless and ever awake (jaghaurvaunghem).' The supreme god Ahura Mazda also has one Eye, or else it is said that 'with his eyes, the sun, moon and stars, he sees everything.' The theory that Mithra was *originally* a title of the supreme heavens-god--putting the sun out of court--is the only one that answers all requirements. It will be evident that here we have origins in abundance for the Freemason's Eye and 'its nunquam dormio.'" The reader must not confuse the Persian Mithra with the Vedic Mitra. According to Alexander Wilder, "The Mithraic rites superseded the Mysteries of Bacchus, and became the foundation of the Gnostic system, which for many centuries prevailed in Asia, Egypt, and even the remote West."



MITHRAS SLAYING THE BULL.

From Lundy's *Monumental Christianity*.

The most famous sculpturings and reliefs of this prototokos show Mithras kneeling upon the recumbent form of a great bull, into whose throat he is driving a sword. The slaying of the bull signifies that the rays of the sun, symbolized by

the sword, release at the vernal equinox the vital essences of the earth--the blood of the bull--which, pouring from the wound made by the Sun God, fertilize the seeds of living things. Dogs were held sacred to the cult of Mithras, being symbolic of sincerity and trustworthiness. The Mithraics used the serpent as an emblem of Ahriman, the Spirit of Evil, and water rats were held sacred to him. The bull is esoterically the Constellation of Taurus; the serpent, its opposite in the zodiac, Scorpio; the sun, Mithras, entering into the side of the bull, slays the celestial creature and nourishes the universe with its blood.



THE BIRTH OF MITHRAS.

From Montfaucon's Antiquities

Mithras was born out of a rock, which, breaking open, permitted him to emerge. This occurred in the darkness of a subterranean chamber. The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem confirms the theory that Jesus was born in a grotto, or cave. According to Dupuis, Mithras was put to death by crucifixion and rose again on the third day

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.

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



THE DEATH OF SIMON THE MAGICIAN.

From the *Nuremberg Chronicle*.

Simon Magus, having called upon the Spirits of the Air, is here shown being picked up by the demons. St. Peter demands that the evil genii release their hold upon the magician. The demons are forced to comply and Simon Magus is killed by the fall.

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: "Bellermaun 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.

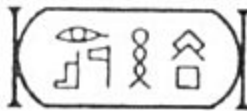
The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This order claimed to be the only sect to have actual pictures of the Divine Syrian. While these were, in all probability, idealistic conceptions of the Savior based upon existing sculpturings and paintings of the pagan sun gods, they were all Christianity had. To the Gnostics, the Christ was the personification of *Nous*, the Divine Mind, and emanated from the higher spiritual *Æons*. He descended into the body of Jesus at the baptism and left it again before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine *Nous* could not suffer death, but that Simon, the Cyrenian, offered his life instead and that the *Nous*, by means of its power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenæus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ:

"When the uncreated, unnamed Father saw the corruption of mankind, He sent His firstborn, *Nous*, into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in Him, out of the power of those that

have fabricated the world (the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles." (See King's *Gnostics and Their Remains*.)

The Gnostics divided humanity into three parts: those who, as savages, worshiped only the visible Nature; those who, like the Jews, worshiped the Demiurgus; and lastly, themselves, or others of a similar cult, including certain sects of Christians, who worshiped *Nous* (Christ) and the true spiritual light of the higher Æons.

After the death of Basilides, Valentinus became the leading inspiration of the Gnostic movement. He still further complicated the system of Gnostic philosophy by adding infinitely to the details. He increased the number of emanations from the Great One (the Abyss) to fifteen pairs and also laid much emphasis on the *Virgin Sophia*, or Wisdom. In the *Books of the Savior*, parts of which are commonly known as the *Pistis Sophia*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of Æons and their strange inhabitants. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrines of the Gnostics, says: "These doctrines, strange as they seem to us, had a wide influence in the Christian Church." Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning scientific subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Gnosticism, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent worshipers), and the Adamites. After the third century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophic world. An effort was made during the Middle Ages to resurrect the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of their records the material necessary was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear other names and their true origin is not suspected. Many of the Gnostic concepts have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are often along the lines of Gnostic emanationism.



## THE MYSTERIES OF, ASAR-HAPI



The identity of the Greco-Egyptian Serapis (known to the Greeks as *Serapis* and the Egyptians as *Asar-Hapi*) is shrouded by an impenetrable veil of mystery. While this deity was a familiar figure among the symbols of the secret Egyptian initiatory rites, his arcane nature was revealed only to those who had fulfilled the requirements of the Serapic cultus. Therefore, in all probability, excepting the initiated priests, the Egyptians themselves were ignorant of his true character. So far as known, there exists no authentic account of the rites of Serapis, but an analysis of the deity and his accompanying symbols reveals their salient points. In an oracle delivered to the King of Cyprus, Serapis described himself thus:

"A god I am such as I show to thee,  
The Starry Heavens are my head, my trunk the sea,  
Earth forms my feet, mine ears the air supplies,  
The Sun's far-darting, brilliant rays, mine eyes."

Several unsatisfactory attempts have been made to etymologize the word *Serapis*. Godfrey Higgins notes that *Soros* was the name given by the Egyptians to a stone coffin, and *Apis* was Osiris incarnate in the sacred bull. These two words combined result in *Soros-Apis* or *Sor-Apis*, "the tomb of the bull." But it is improbable that the Egyptians would worship a coffin in the form of a man.

Several ancient authors, including Macrobius, have affirmed that Serapis was a name for the Sun, because his image so often had a halo of light about its head. In his *Oration Upon the Sovereign Sun*, Julian speaks of the deity in these words: "One Jove, one Pluto, one Sun is Serapis." In Hebrew, Serapis is *Saraph*, meaning "to blaze out" or "to blaze up." For this reason the Jews designated one of their hierarchies of spiritual beings, *Seraphim*.

The most common theory, however, regarding the origin of the name *Serapis* is that which traces its derivation from the compound *Osiris-Apis*. At one time the Egyptians believed that the dead were absorbed into the nature of Osiris, the god of the dead. While marked similarity exists between Osiris-Apis and Serapis, the theory advanced by Egyptologists that Serapis is merely a name given to the dead Apis, or sacred bull of Egypt, is untenable in view of the transcendent wisdom possessed by the Egyptian priestcraft, who, in all probability, used the god to symbolize the soul of the world (*anima mundi*). The material body of Nature was called *Apis*; the soul which escaped from the body at

death but was enmeshed with the form during physical life was designated *Serapis*.

C. W. King believes Serapis to be a deity of Brahmanic extraction, his name being the Grecianized form of *Ser-adah* or *Sri-pa*, two titles ascribed to *Yama*, the Hindu god of death. This appears reasonable, especially since there is a legend to the effect that Serapis, in the form of a bull, was driven by Bacchus from India to Egypt. The priority of the Hindu Mysteries would further substantiate such a theory.

Among other meanings suggested for the word *Serapis* are: "The Sacred Bull," "The Sun in Taurus," "The Soul of Osiris," "The Sacred Serpent," and "The Retiring of the Bull." The last appellation has reference to the ceremony of drowning the sacred Apis in the waters of the Nile every twenty-five years.



THE LION-FACED LIGHT-POWER.

From *Montfaucon's Antiquities*.

This Gnostic gem represents by its serpentine body the pathway of the Sun and by its lion head the exaltation of the solar in the constellation of Leo.



A SYMBOLIC LABYRINTH.

From *Montfaucon's Antiquities*.

Labyrinths and mazes were favored places of initiation among many ancient cults. Remains of these mystic mazes have been found among the American Indians, Hindus, Persians, Egyptians, and Greeks. Some of these mazes are merely involved pathways lined with stones; others are literally miles of gloomy caverns under temples or hollowed from the sides of mountains. The famous labyrinth of Crete, in which roamed the bull-headed Minotaur, was unquestionably a place of initiation into the Cretan Mysteries.

There is considerable evidence that the famous statue of Serapis in the Serapeum at Alexandria was originally worshiped under another name at Sinope, from which it was brought to Alexandria. There is also a legend which tells that Serapis was a very early king of the Egyptians, to whom they owed the foundation of their philosophical and scientific power. After his death this king was elevated to the estate of a god. Phylarchus declared that the word *Serapis* means "the power that disposed the universe into its present beautiful order."

In his *Isis and Osiris*, Plutarch gives the following account of the origin of the magnificent statue of Serapis which stood in the Serapeum at Alexandria:

While he was Pharaoh of Egypt, Ptolemy Soter had a strange dream in which he beheld a tremendous statue, which came to life and ordered the Pharaoh to bring it to Alexandria with all possible speed. Ptolemy Soter, not knowing the whereabouts of the statue, was sorely perplexed as to how he could discover it. While the Pharaoh was relating his dream, a great traveler by the name of Sosibius, coming forward, declared that he had seen such an image at Sinope. The Pharaoh immediately dispatched Soteles and Dionysius to negotiate for the removal of the figure to Alexandria. Three years elapsed before the image was finally obtained, the representatives of the Pharaoh finally stealing it and concealing the theft by spreading a story that the statue had come to life and, walking down the street leading from its temple, had boarded the ship prepared for its transportation to Alexandria. Upon its arrival in Egypt, the figure was brought into the presence of two Egyptian Initiates--the Eumolpid Timotheus and Manetho the Sebennite--who, immediately pronounced it to be Serapis. The priests then declared that it was equipollent to Pluto. This was a masterly stroke, for in Serapis the Greeks and Egyptians found a deity in common and thus religious unity was consummated between the two nations.

Several figures of Serapis that stood in his various temples in Egypt and Rome have been described by early authors. Nearly all these showed Grecian rather than Egyptian influence. In some the body of the god was encircled by the coils of a great serpent. Others showed him as a composite of Osiris and Apis.

A description of the god that in all probability is reasonably accurate is that which represents him as a tall, powerful figure, conveying the twofold impression of manly strength and womanly grace. His face portrayed a deeply pensive mood, the expression inclining toward sadness. His hair was long and arranged in a somewhat feminine manner, resting in curls upon his breast and shoulders. The face, save for its heavy beard, was also decidedly feminine. The figure of Serapis was usually robed from head to foot in heavy draperies, believed by initiates to conceal the fact that his body was androgynous.

Various substances were used in making the statues of Serapis. Some undoubtedly were carved from stone or marble by skilled craftsmen; others may have been cast from base or precious metals. One colossus of Serapis was composed of plates of various metals fitted together. In a labyrinth sacred to Serapis stood a thirteen-foot statue of him reputed to have been made from a single emerald. Modern writers, discussing this image, state that it was made of green glass poured into a mold. According to the Egyptians, however, it withstood all the tests of an actual emerald.

Clement of Alexandria describes a figure of Serapis compounded from the following elements: First, filings of gold, silver, lead, and tin; second, all manner of Egyptian stones, including sapphires, hematites, emeralds, and topazes; all these being ground down and mixed together with the coloring matter left over from the funeral of Osiris and Apis. The result was a rare and curious figure, indigo in color. Some of the statues of Serapis must have been formed of extremely hard substances, for when a Christian soldier, carrying out the edict of Theodosius, struck the Alexandrian Serapis with his ax, that instrument was shattered into fragments and sparks flew from it. It is also quite probable that Serapis was worshiped in the form of a serpent, in common with many of the higher deities of the Egyptian and Greek pantheons.

Serapis was called *Theon Heptagrammaton*, or the god with the name of seven letters. The name *Serapis* (like Abraxas and Mithras) contains

seven letters. In their hymns to Serapis the priests chanted the seven vowels. Occasionally Serapis is depicted with horns or a coronet of seven rays. These evidently represented the seven divine intelligences manifesting through the solar light. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* notes that the earliest authentic mention of Serapis is in connection with the death of Alexander. Such was the prestige of Serapis that he alone of the gods was consulted in behalf of the dying king.

The Egyptian secret school of philosophy was divided into the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries, the former being sacred to Isis and the latter to Serapis and Osiris. Wilkinson is of the opinion that only the priests were permitted to enter the Greater Mysteries. Even the heir to the throne was not eligible until he had been crowned Pharaoh, when, by virtue of his kingly office, he automatically became a priest and the temporal head of the state religion. (See Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Egyptians*.) A limited number were admitted into the Greater Mysteries: these preserved their secrets inviolate.

Much of the information concerning the rituals of the higher degrees of the Egyptian Mysteries has been gleaned from an examination of the chambers and passageways in which the initiations were given. Under the temple of Serapis destroyed by Theodosius were found strange mechanical contrivances constructed by the priests in the subterranean crypts and caverns where the nocturnal initiatory rites were celebrated. These machines indicate the severe tests of moral and physical courage undergone by the candidates. After passing through these tortuous ways, the neophytes who Survived the ordeals were ushered into the presence of Serapis, a noble and awe-inspiring figure illumined by unseen lights.

Labyrinths were also a striking feature in connection with the Rice of Serapis, and E. A. Wallis Budge, in his *Gods of the Egyptians*, depicts Serapis (Minotaur-like) with the body of a man and the head of a bull. Labyrinths were symbolic of the involvements and illusions of the lower world through which wanders the soul of man in its search for truth. In the labyrinth dwells the lower animal man with the head of the bull, who seeks to destroy the soul entangled in the maze of worldly ignorance. In this relation Serapis becomes the Tryer or Adversary who tests the souls of those seeking union with the Immortals. The maze was also doubtless used to represent the solar system, the Bull-Man representing the sun dwelling in the mystic maze of its planets, moons, and asteroids.

The Gnostic Mysteries were acquainted with the arcane meaning of Serapis, and through the medium of Gnosticism this god became inextricably associated with early Christianity. In fact, the Emperor Hadrian, while traveling in Egypt in A.D. 24, declared in a letter to Servianus that the worshipers of Serapis were Christians and that the Bishops of the church also worshiped at his shrine. He even declared that the Patriarch himself, when in Egypt, was forced to adore Serapis as well as Christ. (See Parsons' *New Light on the Great Pyramid*.)

The little-suspected importance of Serapis as a prototype of Christ can be best appreciated after a consideration of the following extract from C. W. King's *Gnostics and Their Remains*: "There can be no doubt that the head of Serapis, marked as the face is by a grave and pensive majesty, supplied the first idea for the conventional portraits of the Saviour. The Jewish prejudices of the first converts were so powerful that we may be sure no attempt was made to depict His countenance until some generations after all that had beheld it on earth had passed away."

Serapis gradually usurped the positions previously occupied by the other Egyptian and Greek gods, and became the supreme deity of both religions. His power continued until the fourth century of



THE ALEXANDRIAN SERAPIS.

From Mosaize *Historie der Hebreeuwse Kerke*.

Serapis is often shown standing on the back of the sacred crocodile, carrying in his left hand a rule with which to measure the inundations of the Nile, and balancing with his right hand a curious emblem consisting of an animal with the heads. The first head--that of a lion--signified the present; the second head--that of a wolf--the past; and the third head--that of a dog--the future. The body with

its three heads was enveloped by the twisted coils of a serpent. Figures of Serapis are occasionally accompanied by Cerberus, the three-headed dog of Pluto, and--like Jupiter--carry baskets of grain upon their heads.

the Christian Era. In A.D. 385, Theodosius, that would-be exterminator of pagan philosophy, issued his memorable edict *De Idolo Serapidis Diruendo*. When the Christian soldiers, in obedience to this order, entered the Serapeum at Alexandria to destroy the image of Serapis which had stood there for centuries, so great was their veneration for the god that they dared not touch the image lest the ground should open at their feet and engulf them. At length, overcoming their fear, they demolished the statue, sacked the building, and finally as a fitting climax to their offense burned the magnificent library which was housed within the lofty apartments of the Serapeum. Several writers have recorded the remarkable fact that Christian symbols were found in the ruined foundations of this pagan temple. Socrates, a church historian of the fifth century, declared that after the pious Christians had razed the Serapeum at Alexandria and scattered the demons who dwelt there under the guise of gods, beneath the foundations was found the monogram of Christ!

Two quotations will further establish the relationship existing between the Mysteries of Serapis and those of other ancient peoples. The first is from Richard Payne Knight's *Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*: "Hence Varro [in *De Lingua Latina*] says that Cœlum and Terra, that is universal mind and productive body, were the Great Gods of the Samothracian Mysteries; and the same as the Serapis and Isis of the later Ægyptians: the Tautos and Astarte of the Phœnicians, and the Saturn and Ops of the Latins." The second quotation is from Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*: "'Thee,' says Martianus Capella, in his hymn to the Sun, 'dwellers on the Nile adore as Serapis, and Memphis worships as Osiris: in the sacred rites of Persia thou art Mithras, in Phrygia, Atys, and Libya bows down to thee as Ammon, and Phœnician Byblos as Adonis; thus the whole world adores thee under different names.'"

## THE ODINIC MYSTERIES

The date of the founding of the Odinic Mysteries is uncertain, some writers declaring that they were established in the first century before Christ; others, the first century after Christ. Robert Macoy, 33°, gives the following description of their origin: "It appears from the northern chronicles that in the first century of the Christian Era, Sigge, the chief of the Aser, an Asiatic tribe, emigrated from the Caspian sea and the

Caucasus into northern Europe. He directed his course northwesterly from the Black sea to Russia, over which, according to tradition, he placed one of his sons as a ruler, as he is said to have done over the Saxons and the Franks. He then advanced through Cimbria to Denmark, which acknowledged his fifth son Skiold as its sovereign, and passed over to Sweden, where Gylf, who did homage to the wonderful stranger, and was initiated into his mysteries, then ruled. He soon made himself master here, built Sigtuna as the capital of his empire, and promulgated a new code of laws, and established the sacred mysteries. He, himself, assumed the name of Odin, founded the priesthood of the twelve Drottars (Druids?) who conducted the secret worship, and the administration of justice, and, as prophets, revealed the future. The secret rites of these mysteries celebrated the death of Balder, the beautiful and lovely, and represented the grief of Gods and men at his death, and his restoration to life." (*General History of Freemasonry*.)

After his death, the historical Odin was apotheosized, his identity being merged into that of the mythological Odin, god of wisdom, whose cult he had promulgated. Odinism then supplanted the worship of Thor, the thunderer, the supreme deity of the ancient Scandinavian pantheon. The mound where, according to legend, King Odin was buried is still to be seen near the site of his great temple at Upsala.

The twelve *Drottars* who presided over the Odinic Mysteries evidently personified the twelve holy and ineffable names of Odin. The rituals of the Odinic Mysteries were very similar to those of the Greeks, Persians, and Brahmins, after which they were patterned. The Drottars, who symbolized the signs of the zodiac, were the custodians of the arts and sciences, which they revealed to those who passed successfully the ordeals of initiation. Like many other pagan cults, the Odinic Mysteries, as an institution, were destroyed by Christianity, but the underlying cause of their fall was the corruption of the priesthood.

Mythology is nearly always the ritual and the symbolism of a Mystery school. Briefly stated, the sacred drama which formed the basis of the Odinic Mysteries was as follows:

The Supreme, invisible Creator of all things was called All-Father. His regent in Nature was Odin, the one-eyed god. Like Quetzalcoatl, Odin was elevated to the dignity of the Supreme Deity. According to the Drottars, the universe was fashioned from the body of *Ymir*, the hoarfrost giant. Ymir was formed from the clouds of mist that rose from



Ginnungagap, the great cleft in chaos into which the primordial frost giants and flame giants had hurled snow and fire. The three gods--Odin, Vili, and Ve--slew Ymir and from him formed the world. From Ymir's various members the different parts of Nature were fashioned.

After Odin had established order, he caused a wonderful palace, called Asgard, to be built on the top of a mountain, and here the twelve Æsir (gods) dwelt together, far above the limitations of mortal men. On this mountain also was Valhalla, the palace of the slain, where those who had heroically died fought and feasted day after day. Each night their wounds were healed and the boar whose flesh they ate renewed itself as rapidly as it was consumed.

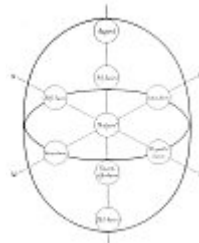
Balder the Beautiful--the Scandinavian Christ--was the beloved son of Odin. Balder was not warlike; his kindly and beautiful spirit brought peace and joy to the hearts of the gods, and they all loved him save one. As Jesus had a Judas among His twelve disciples, so one of the twelve gods was false--Loki, the personification of evil. Loki caused Höthir, the blind god of fate, to shoot Balder with a mistletoe arrow. With the death of Balder, light and joy vanished from the lives of the other deities. Heartbroken, the gods gathered to find a method whereby they could resurrect this spirit of eternal life and youth. The result was the establishment of the Mysteries.

The Odinic Mysteries were given in underground crypts or caves, the chambers, nine in number, representing the Nine Worlds of the Mysteries. The candidate seeking admission was assigned the task of raising Balder from the dead. Although he did not realize it, he himself played the part of Balder. He called himself a wanderer; the caverns through which he passed were symbolic of the worlds and spheres of Nature. The priests who initiated him were emblematic of the sun, the moon, and the stars. The three supreme initiators--the Sublime, the Equal to the Sublime, and the Highest--were analogous to the Worshipful Master and the junior and Senior Wardens of a Masonic lodge.

After wandering for hours through the intricate passageways, the candidate was ushered into the presence of a statue of Balder the Beautiful, the prototype of all initiates into the Mysteries. This figure stood in the center of a great apartment roofed with shields. In the midst of the chamber stood a plant with seven blossoms, emblematic of the planers. In this room, which symbolized the house of the Æsir, or

Wisdom, the neophyte took his oath of secrecy and piety upon the naked blade of a sword. He drank the sanctified mead from a bowl made of a human skull and, having passed successfully through all the tortures and trials designed to divert him from the course of wisdom, he was finally permitted to unveil the mystery of Odin--the personification of wisdom. He was presented, in the name of Balder, with the sacred ring of the order; he was hailed as a man reborn; and it was said of him that he had died and had been raised again without passing through the gates of death.

Richard Wagner's immortal composition, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, is based upon the Mystery rituals of the Odinic cult. While the great composer took many liberties with the original story, the Ring Operas, declared to be the grandest tetralogy of music dramas the world possesses, have caught and preserved in a remarkable manner the majesty and power of the original sagas. Beginning with *Das Rheingold*, the action proceeds through *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* to an awe-inspiring climax in *Götterdämmerung*, "The Twilight of the Gods."



THE NINE WORLDS OF THE ODINIC MYSTERIES.

The Nordic Mysteries were given in nine chambers, or caverns, the candidate advancing through them in sequential order. These chambers of initiation represented the nine spheres into which the Drottars divided the universe: (1) *Asgard*, the Heaven World of the Gods; (2) *Alf-heim*, the World of the light and beautiful Elves, or Spirits; (3) *Nifl-heim*, the World of Cold and Darkness, which is located in the North; (4) *Jotun-heim*, the World of the Giants, which is located in the East; (5) *Midgard*, the Earth World of human beings, which is located in the midst, or middle place; (6) *Vana-heim*, the World of the Vanes, which is located in the West; (7) *Muspells-heim*, the World of Fire, which is located in the South; (8) *Svart-alfa-heim*, the World of the dark and treacherous Elves, which is under the earth; and (9) *Hel-heim*, the World of cold and the abode of the dead, which is located at the very lowest point of the universe. It is to be understood that all of these worlds are invisible to the senses, except Midgard, the home of human creatures, but during the process of initiation the soul of the candidate--liberated

from its earthly sheath by the secret power of the priests--wanders amidst the inhabitants of these various spheres. There is undoubtedly a relationship between the nine worlds of the Scandinavians and the nine spheres, or planes, through which initiates of the Eleusinian Mysteries passed in their ritual of regeneration.

THE most famous of the ancient religious Mysteries were the Eleusinian, whose rites were celebrated every five years in the city of Eleusis to honor Ceres (Demeter, Rhea, or Isis) and her daughter, Persephone. The initiates of the Eleusinian School were famous throughout Greece for the beauty of their philosophic concepts and the high standards of morality which they demonstrated in their daily lives. Because of their excellence, these Mysteries spread to Rome and Britain, and later the initiations were given in both these countries. The Eleusinian Mysteries, named for the community in Attica where the sacred dramas were first presented, are generally believed to have been founded by Eumolpos about fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, and through the Platonic system of philosophy their principles have been preserved to modern times.

The rites of Eleusis, with their Mystic interpretations of Nature's most precious secrets, overshadowed the civilizations of their time and gradually absorbed many smaller schools, incorporating into their own system whatever valuable information these lesser institutions possessed. Heckethorn sees in the Mysteries of Ceres and Bacchus a metamorphosis of the rites of Isis and Osiris, and there is every reason to believe that all so-called secret schools of the ancient world were branches from one philosophic tree which, with its root in heaven and its branches on the earth, is--like the spirit of man--an invisible but ever-present cause of the objectified vehicles that give it expression. The Mysteries were the channels through which this one philosophic light was disseminated, and their initiates, resplendent with intellectual and spiritual understanding, were the perfect fruitage of the divine tree, bearing witness before the material world of the recondite source of all Light and Truth.

The rites of Eleusis were divided into what were called the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries. According to James Gardner, the Lesser Mysteries were celebrated in the spring (probably at the time of the vernal equinox) in the town of Agræ, and the Greater, in the fall (the time of the autumnal equinox) at Eleusis or Athens. It is supposed that the former were given annually and the latter every five years. The rituals of the Eleusinians were highly involved, and to understand them

required a deep study of Greek mythology, which they interpreted in its esoteric light with the aid of their secret keys.

The Lesser Mysteries were dedicated to Persephone. In his *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, Thomas Taylor sums up their purpose as follows: "The Lesser Mysteries were designed by the ancient theologians, their founders, to signify occultly the condition of the unpurified soul invested with an earthy body, and enveloped in a material and physical nature."

The legend used in the Lesser rites is that of the abduction of the goddess Persephone, the daughter of Ceres, by Pluto, the lord of the underworld, or Hades. While Persephone is picking flowers in a beautiful meadow, the earth suddenly opens and the gloomy lord of death, riding in a magnificent chariot, emerges from its somber depths and, grasping her in his arms, carries the screaming and struggling goddess to his subterranean palace, where he forces her to become his queen.

It is doubtful whether many of the initiates themselves understood the mystic meaning of this allegory, for most of them apparently believed that it referred solely to the succession of the seasons. It is difficult to obtain satisfactory information concerning the Mysteries, for the candidates were bound by inviolable oaths never to reveal their inner secrets to the profane. At the beginning of the ceremony of initiation, the candidate stood upon the skins of animals sacrificed for the purpose, and vowed that death should seal his lips before he would divulge the sacred truths which were about to be communicated to him. Through indirect channels, however, some of their secrets have been preserved. The teachings given to the neophytes were substantially as follows:

The soul of man--often called *Psyche*, and in the Eleusinian Mysteries symbolized by Persephone--is essentially a spiritual thing. Its true home is in the higher worlds, where, free from the bondage of material form and material concepts, it is said to be truly alive and self-expressive. The human, or physical, nature of man, according to this doctrine, is a tomb, a quagmire, a false and impermanent thing, the source of all sorrow and suffering. Plato describes the body as the sepulcher of the soul; and by this he means not only the human form but also the human nature.

The gloom and depression of the Lesser Mysteries represented the agony of the spiritual soul unable to express itself because it has accepted the limitations and illusions of the human environment. The crux of the Eleusinian argument was that man is neither better nor wiser after death than during life. If he does not rise above ignorance during his sojourn here, man goes at death into eternity to wander about forever, making the same mistakes which he made here. If he does not outgrow the desire for material possessions here, he will carry it with him into the invisible world, where, because he can never gratify the desire, he will continue in endless agony. Dante's *Inferno* is symbolically descriptive of the sufferings of those who never freed their spiritual natures from the cravings, habits, viewpoints, and limitations of their Plutonic personalities. Those who made no endeavor to improve themselves (whose souls have slept) during their physical lives, passed at death into Hades, where, lying in rows, they slept through all eternity as they had slept through life.

To the Eleusinian philosophers, birth into the physical world was death in the fullest sense of the word, and the only true birth was that of the spiritual soul of man rising out of the womb of his own fleshly nature. "The soul is dead that slumbers," says Longfellow, and in this he strikes the keynote of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Just as Narcissus, gazing at himself in the water (the ancients used this mobile element to symbolize the transitory, illusionary, material universe) lost his life trying to embrace a reflection, so man, gazing into the mirror of Nature and accepting as his real self the senseless clay that he sees reflected, loses the opportunity afforded by physical life to unfold his immortal, invisible Self.

An ancient initiate once said that the living are ruled by the dead. Only those conversant with the Eleusinian concept of life could understand that statement. It means that the majority of people are not ruled by their living spirits but by their senseless (hence dead) animal personalities. Transmigration and reincarnation were taught in these Mysteries, but in a somewhat unusual manner. It was believed that at midnight the invisible worlds were closest to the Terrestrial sphere and that souls coming into material existence slipped in during the midnight hour. For this reason many of the Eleusinian



THE RAPE OF PERSEPHONE.

From Thomassin's *Recueil des Figures, Groupes, Themes, Fontaines, Vases et autres Ornaments*.

Pluto, the lord of the underworld, represents the body intelligence of man; and the rape of Persephone is symbolic of the divine nature assaulted and defiled by the animal soul and dragged downward into the somber darkness of Hades, which is here used as a synonym for the material, or objective, sphere of consciousness.

In his *Disquisitions upon the Painted Greek Vases*, James Christie presents Meursius' version of the occurrences taking place during the nine days required for the enactment of the Greater Eleusinian Rites. The first day was that of general meeting, during which those to be initiated were questioned concerning their several qualifications. The second day was spent in a procession to the sea, possibly for the submerging of a image of the presiding goddess. The third day was opened by the sacrifice of a mullet. On the fourth day the mystic basket containing certain sacred symbols was brought to Eleusis, accompanied by a number of female devotees carrying smaller baskets. On the evening of the fifth day there was a torch race, on the sixth a procession led by a statue of Iacchus, and on the seventh an athletic contest. The eighth day was devoted to a repetition of the ceremonial for the benefit of any who might have been prevented from coming sooner. The ninth and last day was devoted to the deepest philosophical issues of the Eleusinia, during which an urn or jar--the symbol of Bacchus--was exhibited as an emblem of supreme importance.

ceremonies were performed at midnight. Some of those sleeping spirits who had failed to awaken their higher natures during the earth life and who now floated around in the invisible worlds, surrounded by a darkness of their own making, occasionally slipped through at this hour and assumed the forms of various creatures.

The mystics of Eleusis also laid stress upon the evil of suicide, explaining that there was a profound mystery concerning this crime of which they could not speak, but warning their disciples that a great sorrow comes to all who take their own lives. This, in substance, constitutes the esoteric doctrine given to the initiates of the Lesser Mysteries. As the degree dealt largely with the miseries of those who failed to make the best use of their philosophic opportunities, the chambers of initiation were subterranean and the horrors of Hades were vividly depicted in a complicated ritualistic drama. After passing successfully through the tortuous passageways, with their trials and dangers, the candidate received the honorary title of *Mystes*. This meant one who saw through a veil or had a clouded vision. It also signified that the candidate had been brought up to the veil, which would be torn away in the higher degree. The modern word *mystic*, as referring to a seeker after truth according to the dictates of the heart along the path of faith, is probably derived from this ancient word, for faith is belief in the reality of things unseen or veiled.

The Greater Mysteries (into which the candidate was admitted only after he had successfully passed through the ordeals of the Lesser, and not always then) were sacred to Ceres, the mother of Persephone, and represent her as wandering through the world in quest of her abducted daughter. Ceres carried two torches, intuition and reason, to aid her in the search for her lost child (the soul). At last she found Persephone not far from Eleusis, and out of gratitude taught the people there to cultivate corn, which is sacred to her. She also founded the Mysteries. Ceres appeared before Pluto, god of the souls of the dead, and pleaded with him to allow Persephone to return to her home. This the god at first refused to do, because Persephone had eaten of the pomegranate, the fruit of mortality. At last, however, he compromised and agreed to permit Persephone to live in the upper world half of the year if she would stay with him in the darkness of Hades for the remaining half.

The Greeks believed that Persephone was a manifestation of the solar energy, which in the winter months lived under the earth with Pluto, but in the summer returned again with the goddess of productiveness. There is a legend that the flowers loved Persephone and that every year when she left for the dark realms of Pluto, the plants and shrubs would die of grief. While the profane and uninitiated had their own opinions on these subjects, the truths of the Greek allegories remained safely concealed by the priests, who alone recognized the sublimity of these great philosophic and religious parables.

Thomas Taylor epitomizes the doctrines of the Greater Mysteries in the following statement: "The Greater (Mysteries) obscurely intimated, by mystic and splendid visions, the felicity of the soul both here and hereafter when purified from the defilement of a material nature, and constantly elevated to the realities of intellectual (spiritual) vision."

Just as the Lesser Mysteries discussed the prenatal epoch of man when the consciousness in its nine days (embryologically, months) was descending into the realm of illusion and assuming the veil of unreality, so the Greater Mysteries discussed the principles of spiritual regeneration and revealed to initiates not only the simplest but also the most direct and complete method of liberating their higher natures from the bondage of material ignorance. Like Prometheus chained to the top of Mount Caucasus, man's higher nature is chained to his inadequate personality. The nine days of initiation were also symbolic of the nine spheres through which the human soul descends during the process of assuming a terrestrial form. The secret exercises for spiritual unfoldment given to disciples of the higher degrees are unknown, but there is every reason to believe that they were similar to the Brahmanic Mysteries, since it is known that the Eleusinian ceremonies were closed with the Sanskrit words "Konx Om Pax."

That part of the allegory referring to the two six-month periods during one of which Persephone must remain with Pluto, while during the other she may revisit the upper world, offers material for deep consideration. It is probable that the Eleusinians realized that the soul left the body during sleep, or at least was made capable of leaving by the special training which undoubtedly they were in a position to give. Thus Persephone would remain as the queen of Pluto's realm during the waking hours, but would ascend to the spiritual worlds during the periods of sleep. The initiate was taught how to intercede with Pluto to permit Persephone (the initiate's soul) to ascend from the darkness of his material nature into the light of understanding. When thus freed from the shackles of clay and crystallized concepts, the initiate was liberated not only for the period of his life but for all eternity, for never thereafter was he divested of those soul qualities which after death were his vehicles for manifestation and expression in the so-called heaven world.

In contrast to the idea of Hades as a state of darkness below, the gods were said to inhabit the tops of mountains, a well-known example being Mount Olympus, where the twelve deities of the Greek pantheon were said to dwell together. In his initiatory wanderings the neophyte



therefore entered chambers of ever-increasing brilliancy to portray the ascent of the spirit from the lower worlds into the realms of bliss. As the climax to such wanderings he entered a great vaulted room, in the center of which stood a brilliantly illumined statue of the goddess Ceres. Here, in the presence of the hierophant and surrounded by priests in magnificent robes, he was instructed in the highest of the secret mysteries of the Eleusis. At the conclusion of this ceremony he was hailed as an *Epopetes*, which means one who has beheld or seen directly. For this reason also initiation was termed *autopsy*. The Epoptes was then given certain sacred books, probably written in cipher, together with tablets of stone on which secret instructions were engraved.

In *The Obelisk in Freemasonry*, John A. Weisse describes the officiating personages of the Eleusinian Mysteries as consisting of a male and a female hierophant who directed the initiations; a male and a female torchbearer; a male herald; and a male and a female altar attendant. There were also numerous minor officials. He states that, according to Porphyry, the hierophant represents Plato's *Demiurgus*, or Creator of the world; the torch bearer, the Sun; the altar man, the Moon; the herald, Hermes, or Mercury; and the other officials, minor stars.

From the records available, a number of strange and apparently supernatural phenomena accompanied the rituals. Many initiates claim to have actually seen the living gods themselves. Whether this was the result of religious ecstasy or the actual cooperation of invisible powers with the visible priests must remain a mystery. In *The Metamorphosis, or Golden Ass*, Apuleius thus describes what in all probability is his initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries:

"I approached to the confines of death, and having trod on the threshold of Proserpine I, returned from it, being carried through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining with a splendid light; and I manifestly drew near to, the gods beneath, and the gods above, and proximately adored them."

Women and children were admitted to the Eleusinian Mysteries, and at one time there were literally thousands of initiates. Because this vast host was not prepared for the highest spiritual and mystical doctrines, a division necessarily took place within the society itself. The higher teachings were given to only a limited number of initiates who, because of superior mentality, showed a comprehensive grasp of their

underlying philosophical concepts. Socrates refused to be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, for knowing its principles without being a member of the order he realized that membership would seal his tongue. That the Mysteries of Eleusis were based upon great and eternal truths is attested by the veneration in which they were held by the great minds of the ancient world. M. Ouvaroff asks, "Would Pindar, Plato, Cicero, Epictetus, have spoken of them with such admiration, if the hierophant had satisfied himself with loudly proclaiming his own opinions, or those of his order?"

The garments in which candidates were initiated were preserved for many years and were believed to possess almost sacred properties. Just as the soul can have no covering save wisdom and virtue, so the candidates--being as yet without true knowledge--were presented to the Mysteries unclothed, being first: given the skin of an animal and later a consecrated robe to symbolize the philosophical teachings received by the initiate. During the course of initiation the candidate



CERES, THE PATRON OF THE MYSTERIES.

From a mural painting in Pompeii.

Ceres, or Demeter, was the daughter of Kronos and Rhea, and by Zeus the mother of Persephone. Some believe her to be the goddess of the earth, but more correctly she is the deity protecting agriculture in general and corn in particular. The Poppy is sacred to Ceres and she is often shown carrying or ornamented by a garland of these flowers. In the Mysteries, Ceres represented riding in a chariot drawn by winged serpents.



THE PROCESSIONAL OF THE BACCHIC RITES.

From Ovid's *Metamorphosis*.

In the initiation, of the Bacchic Mysteries, the rôle of Bacchus is played by the candidate who, set upon by priests in the guise of the Titans, is slain and finally restored to life amidst great rejoicing. The Bacchic Mysteries were given every three years, and like the Eleusinian Mysteries, were divided into two degrees. The initiates were crowned with myrtle and ivy, plants which were sacred to Bacchus.

In the *Anacalypsis*, Godfrey Higgins conclusively establishes Bacchus (Dionysos) as one of the early pagan forms of the Christos myth, "The birthplace of Bacchus, called Sabazius or Sabaoth, was claimed by several places in Greece; but on Mount Zelmisus, in Thrace, his worship seems to have been chiefly celebrated. He was born of a virgin on the 25th of December; he performed great miracles for the good of mankind; particularly one in which he changed water into wine; he rode in a triumphal procession on an ass; he was put to death by the Titans, and rose again from the dead on the 25th of March: he was always called the Saviour. In his mysteries, he was shown to the people, as an infant is by the Christians at this day, on Christmas Day morning in Rome."

While Apollo most generally represents the sun, Bacchus is also a form of solar energy, for his resurrection was accomplished with the assistance of Apollo. The resurrection of Bacchus signifies merely the extraction or disentanglement of the various Parts of the Bacchic constitution from the Titanic constitution of the world. This is symbolized by the smoke or soot rising from the burned bodies of the Titans. The soul is symbolized by smoke because it is extracted by the fire of the Mysteries. Smoke signifies the ascension of the soul, far evolution is the process of the soul rising, like smoke, from the divinely consumed material mass.

At me time the Bacchic Rites were of a high order, but later they became much degraded . The Bacchanalia, or orgies of Bacchus, are famous in literature.

passed through two gates. The first led downward into the lower worlds and symbolized his birth into ignorance. The second led upward into a room brilliantly lighted by unseen lamps, in which was the statue of Ceres and which symbolized the upper world, or the abode of Light and Truth. Strabo states that the great temple of Eleusis would hold between twenty and thirty thousand people. The caves dedicated by Zarathustra also had these two doors, symbolizing the avenues of birth and death.

The following paragraph from Porphyry gives a fairly adequate conception of Eleusinian symbolism: "God being a luminous principle, residing in the midst of the most subtle fire, he remains for ever invisible to the eyes of those who do not elevate themselves above material life: on this account, the sight of transparent bodies, such as crystal, Parian marble, and even ivory, recalls the idea of divine light; as the sight of gold excites an idea of its purity, for gold cannot be sullied. Some have thought by a black stone was signified the invisibility of the divine essence. To express supreme reason, the Divinity was represented under the human form--and beautiful, for God is the source of beauty; of different ages, and in various attitudes, sitting or upright; of one or the other sex, as a virgin or a young man, a husband or a bride, that all the shades and gradations might be marked. Every thing luminous was subsequently attributed to the gods; the sphere, and all that is spherical, to the universe, to the sun and the moon--sometimes to Fortune and to Hope. The circle, and all circular figures, to eternity--to the celestial movements; to the circles and zones of the heavens. The section of circles, to the phases of the moon; and pyramids and obelisks, to the igneous principle, and through that to the gods of Heaven. A cone expresses the sun, a cylinder the earth; the phallus and triangle (a symbol of the matrix) designate generation." (From *Essay on the Mysteries of Eleusis* by M. Ouvaroff.)

The Eleusinian Mysteries, according to Heckethorn, survived all others and did not cease to exist as an institution until nearly four hundred years after Christ, when they were finally suppressed by Theodosius (styled the Great), who cruelly destroyed all who did not accept the Christian faith. Of this greatest of all philosophical institutions Cicero said that it taught men not only how to live but also how to die.

## THE ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Orpheus, the Thracian bard, the great initiator of the Greeks, ceased to be known as a man and was celebrated as a divinity several centuries before the Christian Era. "As to Orpheus himself \* \* \*, " writes Thomas Taylor, "scarcely a vestige of his life is to be found amongst the immense ruins of time. For who has ever been able to affirm any thing with certainty of his origin, his age, his country, and condition? This alone may be depended on, from general assent, that there formerly lived a person named Orpheus, who was the founder of theology among the Greeks; the institutor of their lives and morals; the first of prophets, and the prince of poets; himself the offspring of a Muse; who taught the Greeks their sacred rites and mysteries, and from whose wisdom, as from a perennial and abundant fountain, the divine muse of Homer and the sublime theology of Pythagoras and Plato flowed." (See *The Mystical Hymns of Orpheus*.)

Orpheus was founder of the Grecian mythological system which he used as the medium for the promulgation of his philosophical doctrines. The origin of his philosophy is uncertain. He may have got it from the Brahmins, there being legends to the effect that he got it was a Hindu, his name possibly being derived from ὀρφανός, meaning "dark." Orpheus was initiated into the Egyptian Mysteries, from which he secured extensive knowledge of magic, astrology, sorcery, and medicine. The Mysteries of the Cabiri at Samothrace were also conferred upon him, and these undoubtedly contributed to his knowledge of medicine and music.

The romance of Orpheus and Eurydice is one of the tragic episodes of Greek mythology and apparently constitutes the outstanding feature of the Orphic Rite. Eurydice, in her attempt to escape from a villain seeking to seduce her, died from the venom of a poisonous serpent which stung her in the heel. Orpheus, penetrating to the very heart of the underworld, so charmed Pluto and Persephone with the beauty of his music that they agreed to permit Eurydice to return to life if Orpheus could lead her back to the sphere of the living without once looking round to see if she were following. So great was his fear, however, that she would stray from him that he turned his head, and Eurydice with a heartbroken cry was swept back into the land of death.

Orpheus wandered the earth for a while disconsolate, and there are several conflicting accounts of the manner of his death. Some declare that he was slain by a bolt of lightning; others, that failing to save his beloved Eurydice, he committed suicide. The generally accepted version of his death, however, is that he was torn to pieces by Ciconian women

whose advances he had spurned. In the tenth book of Plato's *Republic* it is declared that, because of his sad fate at the hands of women, the soul that had once been Orpheus, upon being destined to live again in the physical world, chose rather to return in the body of a swan than be born of woman. The head of Orpheus, after being torn from his body, was cast with his lyre into the river Hebrus, down which it floated to the sea, where, wedging in a cleft in a rock, it gave oracles for many years. The lyre, after being stolen from its shrine and working the destruction of the thief, was picked up by the gods and fashioned into a constellation.

Orpheus has long been sung as the patron of music. On his seven-stringed lyre he played such perfect harmonies that the gods themselves were moved to acclaim his power. When he touched the strings of his instrument the birds and beasts gathered about him, and as he wandered through the forests his enchanting melodies caused even the ancient trees with mighty effort to draw their gnarled roots from out the earth and follow him. Orpheus is one of the many Immortals who have sacrificed themselves that mankind might have the wisdom of the gods. By the symbolism of his music he communicated the divine secrets to humanity, and several authors have declared that the gods, though loving him, feared that he would overthrow their kingdom and therefore reluctantly encompassed his destruction.

As time passed on the historical Orpheus became hopelessly confounded with the doctrine he represented and eventually became the symbol of the Greek school of the ancient wisdom. Thus Orpheus was declared to be the son of Apollo, the divine and perfect truth, and Calliope, the Muse of harmony and rhythm. In other words, Orpheus is the secret doctrine (Apollo) revealed through music (Calliope). Eurydice is humanity dead from the sting of the serpent of false knowledge and imprisoned in the underworld of ignorance. In this allegory Orpheus signifies theology, which wins her from the king of the dead but fails to accomplish her resurrection because it falsely estimates and mistrusts the innate understanding within the human soul. The Ciconian women who tore Orpheus limb from limb symbolize the various contending theological factions which destroy the body of Truth. They cannot accomplish this, however, until their discordant cries drown out the harmony drawn by Orpheus from his magic lyre. The head of Orpheus signifies the esoteric doctrines of his cult. These doctrines continue to live and speak even after his body (the cult) has been destroyed. The lyre is the secret teaching of Orpheus; the seven strings are the seven divine truths which are the keys to universal knowledge. The differing

accounts of his death represent the various means used to destroy the secret teachings: wisdom can die in many ways at the same time. The allegory of Orpheus incarnating in the white swan merely signifies that the spiritual truths he promulgated will continue and will be taught by the illumined initiates of all future ages. The swan is the symbol of the initiates of the Mysteries; it is a symbol also of the divine power which is the progenitor of the world.

## THE BACCHIC AND DIONYSIAC RITES

The Bacchic Rite centers around the allegory of the youthful Bacchus (Dionysos or Zagreus) being torn to pieces by the Titans. These giants accomplished the destruction of Bacchus by causing him to become fascinated by his own image in a mirror. After dismembering him, the Titans first boiled the pieces in water and afterwards roasted them. Pallas rescued the heart of the murdered god, and by this precaution Bacchus (Dionysos) was enabled to spring forth again in all his former glory. Jupiter, the Demiurgus, beholding the crime of the Titans, hurled his thunderbolts and slew them, burning their bodies to ashes with heavenly fire. Out of the ashes of the Titans--which also contained a portion of the flesh of Bacchus, whose body they had partly devoured--the human race was created. Thus the mundane life of every man was said to contain a portion of the Bacchic life.

For this reason the Greek Mysteries warned against suicide. He who attempts to destroy himself raises his hand against the nature of Bacchus within him, since man's body is indirectly the tomb of this god and consequently must be preserved with the greatest care.

Bacchus (Dionysos) represents the rational soul of the inferior world. He is the chief of the Titans--the artificers of the mundane spheres. The Pythagoreans called him the *Titanic monad*. Thus Bacchus is the all-inclusive idea of the Titanic sphere and the Titans--or *gods of the fragments*--the active agencies by means of which universal substance is fashioned into the pattern of this idea. The Bacchic state signifies the unity of the rational soul in a state of self-knowledge, and the Titanic state the diversity of the rational soul which, being scattered throughout creation, loses the consciousness of its own essential one-ness. The mirror into which Bacchus gazes and which is the cause of his fall is the great sea of illusion--the lower world fashioned by the Titans. Bacchus (the mundane rational soul), seeing his image before him, accepts the image as a likeness of himself and ensouls the likeness; that is, the

rational idea ensouls its reflection--the irrational universe. By ensouling the irrational image it implants in it the urge to become like its source, the rational image. Therefore the ancients said that man does not know the gods by logic or by reason but rather by realizing the presence of the gods within himself.

After Bacchus gazed into the mirror and followed his own reflection into matter, the rational soul of the world was broken up and distributed by the Titans throughout the mundane sphere of which it is the essential nature, but the heart, or source, of it they could not: scatter. The Titans took the dismembered body of Bacchus and boiled it in water--symbol of immersion in the material universe--which represents the incorporation of the Bacchic principle in form. The pieces were afterwards roasted to signify the subsequent ascension of the spiritual nature out of form.

When Jupiter, the father of Bacchus and the Demiurgus of the universe, saw that the Titans were hopelessly involving the rational or divine idea by scattering its members through the constituent parts of the lower world, he slew the Titans in order that the divine idea might not be entirely lost. From the ashes of the Titans he formed mankind, whose purpose of existence was to preserve and eventually to release the Bacchic idea, or rational soul, from the Titanic fabrication. Jupiter, being the Demiurgus and fabricator of the material universe, is the third person of the Creative Triad, consequently the Lord of Death, for death exists only in the lower sphere of being over which he presides. Disintegration takes place so that reintegration may follow upon a higher level of form or intelligence. The thunderbolts of Jupiter are emblematic of his disintegrative power; they reveal the purpose of death, which is to rescue the rational soul from the devouring power of the irrational nature.

Man is a composite creature, his lower nature consisting of the fragments of the Titans and his higher nature the sacred, immortal flesh (life) of Bacchus. Therefore man is capable of either a Titanic (irrational) or a Bacchic (rational) existence. The Titans of Hesiod, who were twelve in number, are probably analogous to the celestial zodiac, whereas the Titans who murdered and dismembered Bacchus represent the zodiacal powers distorted by their involvement in the material world. Thus Bacchus represents the sun who is dismembered by the signs of the zodiac and from whose body the universe is formed. When the terrestrial forms were created from the various parts of his body the sense of wholeness was lost and the sense of separateness established.



The heart of Bacchus, which was saved by Pallas, or Minerva, was lifted out of the four elements symbolized by his dismembered body and placed in the ether. The heart of Bacchus is the immortal center of the rational soul.

After the rational soul had been distributed throughout creation and the nature of man, the Bacchic Mysteries were instituted for the purpose of disentangling it from the irrational Titanic nature. This disentanglement was the process of lifting the soul out of the state of separateness into that of unity. The various parts and members of Bacchus were collected from the different corners of the earth. When all the rational parts are gathered Bacchus is resurrected.

The Rites of Dionysos were very similar to those of Bacchus, and by many these two gods are considered as one. Statues of Dionysos were carried in the Eleusinian Mysteries, especially the lesser degrees. Bacchus, representing the soul of the mundane sphere, was capable of an infinite multiplicity of form and designations. Dionysos apparently was his solar aspect.

The Dionysiac Architects constituted an ancient secret society, in principles and doctrines much like the modern Freemasonic Order. They were an organization of builders bound together by their secret knowledge of the relationship between the earthly and the divine sciences of architectonics. They were supposedly employed by King Solomon in the building of his Temple, although they were not Jews, nor did they worship the God of the Jews, being followers of Bacchus and Dionysos. The Dionysiac Architects erected many of the great monuments of antiquity. They possessed a secret language and a system of marking their stones. They had annual convocations and sacred feasts. The exact nature of their doctrines is unknown. It is believed that CHiram Abiff was an initiate of this society.

## The Initiation of the Pyramid

SUPREME among the wonders of antiquity, unrivaled by the achievements of later architects and builders, the Great Pyramid of Gizeh bears mute witness to an unknown civilization which, having completed its predestined span, passed into oblivion. Eloquent in its silence, inspiring in its majesty, divine in its simplicity, the Great Pyramid is indeed a sermon in stone. Its magnitude overwhelms the

puny sensibilities of man. Among the shifting sands of time it stands as a fitting emblem of eternity itself. Who were the illumined mathematicians who planned its parts and dimensions, the master craftsmen who supervised its construction, the skilled artisans who trued its blocks of stone?

The earliest and best-known account of the building of the Great Pyramid is that given by that highly revered but somewhat imaginative historian, Herodotus. "The pyramid was built in steps, battlement-wise, as it is called, or, according to others, altar-wise. After laying the stones for the base, they raised the remaining stones to their places by means of machines formed of short wooden planks. The first machine raised them from the ground to the top of the first step. On this there was another machine, which received the stone upon its arrival, and conveyed it to the second step, whence a third machine advanced it still higher. Either they had as many machines as there were steps in the pyramid, or possibly they had but a single machine, which, being easily moved, was transferred from tier to tier as the stone rose. Both accounts are given, and therefore I mention both. The upper portion of the pyramid was finished first, then the middle, and finally the part which was lowest and nearest the ground. There is an inscription in Egyptian characters on the pyramid which records the quantity of radishes, onions, and garlick consumed by the labourers who constructed it; and I perfectly well remember that the interpreter who read the writing to me said that the money expended in this way was 1600 talents of silver. If this then is a true record, what a vast sum must have been spent on the iron tools used in the work, and on the feeding and clothing of the labourers, considering the length of time the work lasted, which has already been stated [ten years], and the additional time--no small space, I imagine--which must have been occupied by the quarrying of the stones, their conveyance, and the formation of the underground apartments."

While his account is extremely colorful, it is apparent that the Father of History, for reasons which he doubtless considered sufficient, concocted a fraudulent story to conceal the true origin and purpose of the Great Pyramid. This is but one of several instances in his writings which would lead the thoughtful reader to suspect that Herodotus himself was an initiate of the Sacred Schools and consequently obligated to preserve inviolate the secrets of the ancient orders. The theory advanced by Herodotus and now generally accepted that the Pyramid was the tomb of the Pharaoh Cheops cannot be substantiated. In fact, Manetho, Eratosthenes, and Diodorus Siculus all differ from Herodotus--as well

as from each other--regarding the name of the builder of this supreme edifice. The sepulchral vault, which, according to the Lepsius Law of pyramid construction, should have been finished at the same time as the monument or sooner, was never completed. There is no proof that the building was erected by the Egyptians, for the elaborate carvings with which the burial chambers of Egyptian royalty are almost invariably ornamented are entirely lacking and it embodies none of the elements of their architecture or decoration, such as inscriptions, images, cartouches, paintings, and other distinctive features associated with dynastic mortuary art. The only hieroglyphics to be found within the Pyramid are a few builders' marks sealed up in the *chambers of construction*, first opened by Howard Vyse. These apparently were painted upon the stones before they were set in position, for in a number of instances the marks were either inverted or disfigured by the operation of fitting the blocks together. While Egyptologists have attempted to identify the crude dabs of paint as cartouches of Cheops, it is almost inconceivable that this ambitious ruler would have permitted his royal name to suffer such indignities. As the most eminent authorities on the subject are still uncertain as to the true meaning of these crude markings, whatever proof they might be that the building was erected during the fourth dynasty is certainly offset by the sea shells at the base of the Pyramid which Mr. Gab advances as evidence that it was erected before the Deluge--a theory substantiated by the much-abused Arabian traditions. One Arabian historian declared that the Pyramid was built by the Egyptian sages as a refuge against the Flood, while another proclaimed it to have been the treasure house of the powerful antediluvian king Sheddad Ben Ad. A panel of hieroglyphs over the entrance, which the casual observer might consider to afford a solution of the mystery, unfortunately dates back no further than A.D. 1843, having been cut at that time by Dr. Lepsius as a tribute to the King of Prussia.

Caliph al Mamoun, an illustrious descendant of the Prophet, inspired by stories of the immense treasures sealed within its depths, journeyed from Bagdad to Cairo, A.D. 820, with a great force of workmen to open the mighty Pyramid. When Caliph al Mamoun first reached the foot of the "Rock of Ages" and gazed up at its smooth glistening surface, a tumult of emotions undoubtedly racked his soul. The casing stones must have been in place at the time of his visit, for the Caliph could find no indication of an entrance--four perfectly smooth surfaces confronted him. Following vague rumors, he set his followers to work on the north side of the Pyramid, with instructions to keep on cutting and chiseling until they discovered something. To the Moslems with their crude

instruments and vinegar it was a herculean effort to tunnel a full hundred feet through the limestone. Many times they were on the point of rebellion, but the word of the Caliph was law and the hope of a vast fortune buoyed them up.

At last on the eve of total discouragement fate came to their rescue. A great stone was heard to fall somewhere in the wall near the toiling and disgruntled Arabs. Pushing on toward the sound with renewed enthusiasm, they finally broke into the descending passage which leads into the subterranean chamber. They then chiseled their way around the great stone portcullis which had fallen into a position barring their progress, and attacked and removed one after another the granite plugs which for a while continued to slide down the passage leading from the Queen's Chamber above.

Finally no more blocks descended and the way was clear for the followers of the Prophet. But where were the treasures? From room to room the frantic workmen rushed, looking in vain for loot. The discontent of the Moslems reached such a height that Caliph al Mamoun--who had inherited much of the wisdom of his illustrious father, the Caliph al Raschid--sent to Bagdad for funds, which he caused to be secretly buried near the entrance of the Pyramid. He then ordered his men to dig at that spot and great was their rejoicing when the treasure was discovered, the workmen being deeply impressed by the wisdom of the antediluvian monarch who had carefully estimated their wages and thoughtfully caused the exact amount to be buried for their benefit!

The Caliph then returned to the city of his fathers and the Great Pyramid was left to the mercy of succeeding generations. In the ninth century the sun's rays striking the highly polished surfaces of the original casing stones caused each side of the Pyramid to appear as a dazzling triangle of light. Since that time, all but two of these casing stones have disappeared. Investigation has resulted in their discovery, recut and resurfaced, in the walls of Mohammedan mosques and palaces in various parts of Cairo and its environs.

## **PYRAMID PROBLEMS**

C. Piazzzi Smyth asks: "Was the Great Pyramid, then, erected before the invention of hieroglyphics, and previous to the birth of the Egyptian religion?" Time may yet prove that the upper chambers of the Pyramid



ŒDIPUS AND THE SPHINX.

From Levi's *Les Mystères de la Kaballe*.

The Egyptian Sphinx is closely related to the Greek legend of Œdipus, who first solved the famous riddle propounded by the mysterious creature with the body of a winged lion and the head of a woman which frequented the highway leading to Thebes. To each who passed her lair the sphinx addressed the question, "What animal is it that in the morning goes on four feet, at noon on two feet, and in the evening on three feet?" These who failed to answer her riddle she destroyed. Œdipus declared the answer to be man himself, who in childhood crawled upon his hands and knees, in manhood stood erect, and in old age shuffled along supporting himself by a staff. Discovering one who knew the answer to her riddle, the sphinx cast herself from the cliff which bordered the road and perished.

There is still another answer to the riddle of the sphinx, an answer best revealed by a consideration of the Pythagorean values of numbers. The 4, the 2 and the 3 produce the sum of 9, which is the natural number of man and also of the lower worlds. The 4 represents the ignorant man, the 2 the intellectual man, and the 3 the spiritual man. Infant humanity walks on four legs, evolving humanity on two legs, and to the power of his own mind the redeemed and illumined magus adds the staff of wisdom. The sphinx is therefore the mystery of Nature, the embodiment of the secret doctrine, and all who cannot solve her riddle perish. To pass the sphinx is to attain personal immortality.

were a sealed mystery before the establishment of the Egyptian empire. In the subterranean chamber, however, are markings which indicate that the Romans gained admission there. In the light of the secret philosophy of the Egyptian initiates, W. W. Harmon, by a series of extremely complicated yet exact mathematical calculations; determines that the first ceremonial of the Pyramid was performed 68,890 years ago on the occasion when the star Vega for the first time sent its ray down

the descending passage into the pit. The actual building of the Pyramid was accomplished in the period of from ten to fifteen years immediately preceding this date.

While such figures doubtless will evoke the ridicule of modern Egyptologists, they are based upon an exhaustive study of the principles of sidereal mechanics as incorporated into the structure of the Pyramid by its initiated builders. If the casing stones were in position at the beginning of the ninth century, the so-called erosion marks upon the outside were not due to water. The theory also that the salt upon the interior stones of the Pyramid is evidence that the building was once submerged is weakened by the scientific fact that this kind of stone is subject to exudations of salt. While the building may have been submerged, at least in part, during the many thousands of years since its erection, the evidence adduced to prove this point is not conclusive.

The Great Pyramid was built of limestone and granite throughout, the two kinds of rock being combined in a peculiar and significant manner. The stones were trued with the utmost precision, and the cement used was of such remarkable quality that it is now practically as hard as the stone itself. The limestone blocks were sawed with bronze saws, the teeth of which were diamonds or other jewels. The chips from the stones were piled against the north side of the plateau on which the structure stands, where they form an additional buttress to aid in supporting the weight of the structure. The entire Pyramid is an example of perfect orientation and actually squares the circle. This last is accomplished by dropping a vertical line from the apex of the Pyramid to its base line. If this vertical line be considered as the radius of an imaginary circle, the length of the circumference of such a circle will be found to equal the sum of the base lines of the four sides of the Pyramid.

If the passage leading to the King's Chamber and the Queen's Chamber was sealed up thousands of years before the Christian Era, those later admitted into the Pyramid Mysteries must have received their initiations in subterranean galleries now unknown. Without such galleries there could have been no possible means of ingress or egress, since the single surface entrance was completely dosed with casing stones. If not blocked by the mass of the Sphinx or concealed in some part of that image, the secret entrance may be either in one of the adjacent temples or upon the sides of the limestone plateau.

Attention is called to the granite plugs filling the ascending passageway to the Queen's Chamber which Caliph al Mamoun was forced practically to pulverize before he could clear a way into the upper chambers. C. Piazza Smyth notes that the positions of the stones demonstrate that they were set in place from above--which made it necessary for a considerable number of workmen to depart from the upper chambers. How did they do it? Smyth believes they descended through the well (see diagram), dropping the ramp stone into place behind them. He further contends that robbers probably used the well as a means of getting into the upper chambers. The ramp stone having been set in a bed of plaster, the robbers were forced to break through it, leaving a jagged opening. Mr. Dupré, an architect who has spent years investigating the pyramids, differs from Smyth, however, in that he believes the well itself to be a robbers' hole, being the first successful attempt made to enter the upper chambers from the subterranean chamber, then the only open section of the Pyramid.

Mr. Dupré bases his conclusion upon the fact that the well is merely a rough hole and the grotto an irregular chamber, without any evidence of the architectural precision with which the remainder of the structure was erected. The diameter of the well also precludes the possibility of its having been dug downward; it must have been gouged out from below, and the grotto was necessary to supply air to the thieves. It is inconceivable that the Pyramid builders would break one of their own ramp stones and leave its broken surface and a gaping hole in the side wall of their otherwise perfect gallery. If the well is a robbers' hole, it may explain why the Pyramid was empty when Caliph al Mamoun entered it and what happened to the missing coffer lid. A careful examination of the so-called unfinished subterranean chamber, which must have been the base of operations for the robbers, might disclose traces of their presence or show where they piled the rubble which must have accumulated as a result of their operations. While it is not entirely clear by what entrance the robbers reached the subterranean chamber, it is improbable that they used the descending passageway.

There is a remarkable niche in the north wall of the Queen's Chamber which the Mohammedan guides glibly pronounce to be a shrine. The general shape of this niche, however, with its walls converging by a series of overlaps like those of the Grand Gallery, would indicate that originally it had been intended as a passageway. Efforts made to explore this niche have been nonproductive, but Mr. Dupré believes an entrance to exist here through which--if the well did not exist at the

time--the workmen made their exit from the Pyramid after dropping the stone plugs into the ascending gallery.

Biblical scholars have contributed a number of most extraordinary conceptions regarding the Great Pyramid. This ancient edifice has been identified by them as Joseph's granary (despite its hopelessly inadequate capacity); as the tomb prepared for the unfortunate Pharaoh of the Exodus who could not be buried there because his body was never recovered from the Red Sea; and finally as a perpetual confirmation of the infallibility of the numerous prophecies contained in the Authorized Version!

### THE SPHINX

Although the Great Pyramid, as Ignatius Donnelly has demonstrated, is patterned after an antediluvian type of architecture, examples of which are to be found in nearly every part of the world, the Sphinx (*Hu*) is typically Egyptian. The stele between its paws states the Sphinx is an image of the Sun God, Harmackis, which was evidently made in the similitude of the Pharaoh during whose reign it was chiseled. The statue was restored and completely excavated by Tahutmes IV as the result of a vision in which the god had appeared and declared himself oppressed by the weight of the sand about his body. The broken beard of the Sphinx was discovered during excavations between the front paws. The steps leading up to the sphinx and also the temple and altar between the paws are much later additions, probably Roman, for it is known that the Romans reconstructed many Egyptian antiquities. The shallow depression in the crown of the head, once thought to be the terminus of a closed up passageway leading from the Sphinx to the Great Pyramid, was merely intended to help support a headdress now missing.

Metal rods have been driven into the Sphinx in a vain effort to discover chambers or passages within its body. The major part of the Sphinx is a single stone, but the front paws have been built up of smaller stones. The Sphinx is about 200 feet long, 70 feet high, and 38 feet wide across the shoulders. The main stone from which it was carved is believed by some to have been transported from distant quarries by methods unknown, while others assert it to be native rock, possibly an outcropping somewhat resembling the form into which it was later carved. The theory once advanced that both the Pyramid and the Sphinx were built from artificial stones made on the spot has been



abandoned. A careful analysis of the limestone shows it to be composed of small sea creatures called *mummulites*.

The popular supposition that the Sphinx was the true portal of the Great Pyramid, while it survives with surprising tenacity, has never been substantiated. P. Christian presents this theory as follows, basing it in part upon the authority of Iamblichus:

"The Sphinx of Gizeh, says the author of the *Traité des Mystères*, served as the entrance to the sacred subterranean chambers in which the trials of the initiate were undergone. This entrance, obstructed in our day by sands and rubbish, may still be traced between the forelegs of the crouched colossus. It was formerly closed by a bronze gate whose secret spring could be operated only by the Magi. It was guarded by public respect: and a sort of religious fear maintained its inviolability better than armed protection would have done. In the belly of the Sphinx were cut out galleries leading to the subterranean part of the Great Pyramid. These galleries were so artfully crisscrossed along their course to the Pyramid that in setting forth into the passage without a guide through this network, one ceaselessly and inevitably returned to the starting point." (See *Histoire de la Magie*.)

Unfortunately, the bronze door referred to cannot be found, nor is there any evidence that it ever existed. The passing centuries have wrought many changes in the colossus, however, and the original opening may have been closed.

Nearly all students of the subject believe that subterranean chambers exist beneath the Great Pyramid. Robert Ballard writes: "The priests of the Pyramids of Lake Moeris had their vast subterranean residences. It appears to me more than probable that those of Gizeh were similarly provided. And I may go further:--Out of these very caverns may have been excavated the limestone of which the Pyramids were built. \* \* \* In the bowels of the limestone ridge on which the Pyramids are built will yet be found, I feel convinced, ample information as to their uses. A good diamond drill with two or three hundred feet of rods is what is wanted to test this, and the solidarity of the Pyramids at the same time." (See *The Solution of the Pyramid Problem*.)



A VERTICAL SECTION OF THE GREAT PYRAMID.

From Smyth's *Life and Work at the Great Pyramid*.

The Great Pyramid stands upon a limestone plateau at the base of which, according to ancient history, the Nile once flooded, thus supplying a method for the huge blocks used in its construction. Presuming that the capstone as originally in place, the Pyramid is, according to John Taylor, in round figures 486 feet high; the base of each side is 764 feet long, and the entire structure covers a ground area of more than 13 acres.

The Great Pyramid is the only one in the group at Gizeh--in fact, as far as known, the only one in Egypt--that has chambers within the actual body of the Pyramid itself. For this reason it is said to refute the Lepsius Law, which asserts that each of these structures is a monument raised over a subterranean chamber in which a ruler is entombed. The Pyramid contains four chambers, which in the diagram are lettered K, H, F, and O.

The King's Chamber (K) is an oblong apartment 39 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 19 feet high (disregarding fractional parts of a foot in each case), with a flat roof consisting of nine great stones, the largest in the Pyramid. Above the King's Chamber are five low compartments (L), generally termed construction chambers. In the lowest of these the so-called hieroglyphs of the Pharaoh Cheops are located. The roof of the fifth construction chamber is peaked. At the end of the King's Chamber opposite the entrance stands the famous sarcophagus, or coffer (I), and behind it is a shallow opening that was dug in the hope of discovering valuables. Two air vents (M, N) passing through the entire body of the Pyramid ventilate the King's Chamber. In itself this is sufficient to establish that the building was not intended for a tomb.

Between the upper end of the Grand Gallery (G. G.) and the King's Chamber is a small antechamber (H), its extreme length 9 feet, its extreme width 5 feet, and its extreme height 12 feet, with its walls grooved for purposes now unknown. In the groove nearest the Grand Gallery is a slab of stone in two sections, with a peculiar boss or knob protruding about an inch from the surface of the upper part facing the Grand Gallery. This stone does not reach to the floor of the antechamber and those entering the King's Chamber must pass under the slab. From the King's Chamber, the Grand Gallery--157 feet in length, 28 feet in height,

7 feet in width at its widest point and decreasing to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet as the result of seven converging overlaps, of the stones forming the walls--descends to a little above the level of the Queen's Chamber. Here a gallery (E) branches off, passing mere than 100 feet back towards the center of the Pyramid and opening into the Queen's Chamber (F). The Queen's Chamber is 19 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 20 feet high. Its roof is peaked and composed of great slabs of stone. Air passages not shown lead from the Queen's Chamber, but these were not open originally. In the east wall of the Queen's Chamber is a peculiar niche of gradually converging stone, which in all likelihood, may prove to be a new lost entrance way.

At the point where the Grand Gallery ends and the horizontal passage towards the Queen's Chamber begins is the entrance to the well and also the opening leading down the first ascending passage (D) to the point where this passage meets the descending passage (A) leading from the outer wall of the Pyramid down to the subterranean chamber. After descending 59 feet down the well (P), the grotto is reached. Continuing through the floor of the grotto the well leads downward 133 feet to the descending entrance passage (A), which it meets a short distance before this passage becomes horizontal and leads into the subterranean chamber.

The subterranean chamber (O) is about 46 feet long and 27 feet wide, but is extremely low, the ceiling varying in height from a little over 3 feet to about 13 feet from the rough and apparently unfinished floor. From the south side of the subterranean chamber a low tunnel runs about 50 feet and then meets a blank wall. These constitute the only known openings in the Pyramid, with the exception of a few niches, exploration holes, blind passages, and the rambling cavernous tunnel (B) hewn out by the Moslems under the leadership of the Prophet's descendant, Caliph al Mamoun.

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Mr. Ballard's theory of extensive underground apartments and quarries brings up an important problem in architectonics. The Pyramid builders were too farsighted to endanger the permanence of the Great Pyramid by placing over five million tons of limestone and granite on any but a solid foundation. It is therefore reasonably certain that such chambers or passageways as may exist beneath the building are relatively insignificant, like those within the body of the structure, which occupy less than one sixteen-hundredth of the cubic contents of the Pyramid.

The Sphinx was undoubtedly erected for symbolical purposes at the instigation of the priestcraft. The theories that the uræus upon its forehead was originally the finger of an immense sundial and that both the Pyramid and the Sphinx were used to measure time, the seasons,

and the precession of the equinoxes are ingenious but not wholly convincing. If this great creature was erected to obliterate the ancient passageway leading into the subterranean temple of the Pyramid, its symbolism would be most appropriate. In comparison with the overwhelming size and dignity of the Great Pyramid, the Sphinx is almost insignificant. Its battered face, upon which may still be seen vestiges of the red paint with which the figure was originally covered, is disfigured beyond recognition. Its nose was broken off by a fanatical Mohammedan, lest the followers of the Prophet be led into idolatry. The very nature of its construction and the present repairs necessary to prevent the head from falling off indicate that it could not have survived the great periods of time which have elapsed since the erection of the Pyramid.

To the Egyptians, the Sphinx was the symbol of strength and intelligence. It was portrayed as androgynous to signify that they recognized the initiates and gods as partaking of both the positive and negative creative powers. Gerald Massey writes: "This is the secret of the Sphinx. The orthodox sphinx of Egypt is masculine in front and feminine behind. So is the image of Sut-Typhon, a type of horn and tail, male in front and female behind. The Pharaohs, who wore the tail of the Lioness or Cow behind them, were male in front and female behind. Like the Gods they included the dual totality of Being in one person, born of the Mother, but of both sexes as the Child." (See *The Natural Genesis*.)

Most investigators have ridiculed the Sphinx and, without even deigning to investigate the great colossus, have turned their attention to the more overwhelming mystery of the Pyramid.

## THE PYRAMID MYSTERIES

The word pyramid is popularly supposed to be derived from  $\pi\rho\upsilon\rho$ , fire, thus signifying that it is the symbolic representation of the One Divine Flame, the life of every creature. John Taylor believes the word pyramid to mean a "measure of wheat," while C. Piazzzi Smyth favors the Coptic meaning, "a division into ten." The initiates of old accepted the pyramid form as the ideal symbol of both the secret doctrine and those institutions established for its dissemination. Both pyramids and mounds are antitypes of the Holy Mountain, or High Place of God, which was believed to stand in the "midst" of the earth. John P. Lundy

relates the Great Pyramid to the fabled Olympus, further assuming that its subterranean passages correspond to the tortuous byways of Hades.

The square base of the Pyramid is a constant reminder that the House of Wisdom is firmly founded upon Nature and her immutable laws. "The Gnostics," writes Albert Pike, "claimed that the whole edifice of their science rested on a square whose angles were: Σιγη, Silence; Βυθος, Profundity; Νοϋς, Intelligence; and Αληθεια Truth." (See *Morals and Dogma*.) The sides of the Great Pyramid face the four cardinal angles, the latter signifying according to Eliphas Levi the extremities of heat and cold (south and north) and the extremities of light and darkness (east and west). The base of the Pyramid further represents the four material elements or substances from the combinations of which the quaternary body of man is formed. From each side of the square there rises a triangle, typifying the threefold divine being enthroned within every quaternary material nature. If each base line be considered a square from which ascends a threefold spiritual power, then the sum of the lines of the four faces (12) and the four hypothetical squares (16) constituting the base is 28, the sacred number of the lower world. If this be added to the three septenaries composing the sun (21), it equals 49, the square of 7 and the number of the universe.

The twelve signs of the zodiac, like the Governors' of the lower worlds, are symbolized by the twelve lines of the four triangles--the faces of the Pyramid. In the midst of each face is one of the beasts of Ezekiel, and the structure as a whole becomes the Cherubim. The three main chambers of the Pyramid are related to the heart, the brain, and the generative system--the spiritual centers of the human constitution. The triangular form of the Pyramid also is similar to the posture assumed by the body during the ancient meditative exercises. The Mysteries taught that the divine energies from the gods descended upon the top of the Pyramid, which was likened to an inverted tree with its branches below and its roots at the apex. From this inverted tree the divine wisdom is disseminated by streaming down the diverging sides and radiating throughout the world.

The size of the capstone of the Great Pyramid cannot be accurately determined, for, while most investigators have assumed that it was once in place, no vestige of it now remains. There is a curious tendency among the builders of great religious edifices to leave their creations unfinished, thereby signifying that God alone is complete. The capstone--if it existed--was itself a miniature pyramid, the apex of which again would be capped by a smaller block of similar shape, and

so on *ad infinitum*. The capstone therefore is the epitome of the entire structure. Thus, the Pyramid may be likened to the universe and the capstone to man. Following the chain of analogy, the mind is the capstone of man, the spirit the capstone of the mind, and God--the epitome of the whole--the capstone of the spirit. As a rough and unfinished block, man is taken from the quarry and by the secret culture of the Mysteries gradually transformed into a trued and perfect pyramidal capstone. The temple is complete only when the initiate himself becomes the living apex through which the divine power is focused into the diverging structure below.

W. Marsham Adams calls the Great Pyramid "the House of the Hidden Places"; such indeed it was, for it represented the inner sanctuary of pre-Egyptian wisdom. By the Egyptians the Great Pyramid was associated with Hermes, the god of wisdom and letters and the Divine Illuminator worshiped through the planet Mercury. Relating Hermes to the Pyramid emphasizes anew the fact that it was in reality the supreme temple of the Invisible and Supreme Deity. The Great Pyramid was not a lighthouse, an observatory, or a tomb, but the first temple of the Mysteries, the first structure erected as a repository for those secret truths which are the certain foundation of all arts and sciences. It was the perfect emblem of the *microcosm* and the *macrocosm* and, according to the secret teachings, the tomb of Osiris, the black god of the Nile. Osiris represents a certain manifestation of solar energy, and therefore his house or tomb is emblematic of the universe within which he is entombed and upon the cross of which he is crucified.

Through the mystic passageways and chambers of the Great Pyramid passed the illumined of antiquity. They entered its portals as *men*; they came forth as *gods*. It was the place of the "second birth," the "womb of the Mysteries," and wisdom dwelt in it as God dwells in the hearts of men. Somewhere in the depths of its recesses there resided an unknown being who was called "The Initiator," or "The Illustrious One," robed in blue and gold and bearing in his hand the sevenfold key of Eternity. This was the lion-faced hierophant, the Holy One, the Master of Masters, who never left the House of Wisdom and whom no man ever saw save he who had passed through the gates of preparation and purification. It was in these chambers that Plato--he of the broad brow---came face to face with the wisdom of the ages personified in the Master of the Hidden House.

Who was the Master dwelling in the mighty Pyramid, the many rooms of which signified the worlds in space; the Master whom none might

behold save those who had been "born again"? He alone fully knew the secret of the Pyramid, but he has departed the way of the wise and the house is empty. The hymns of praise no longer echo in muffled tones through the chambers; the neophyte no longer passes through the elements and wanders among the seven stars; the candidate no longer receives the "Word of Life" from the lips of the Eternal One. Nothing now remains that the eye of man can see but an empty shell--the outer symbol of an inner truth--and men call the House of God a tomb!

The technique of the Mysteries was unfolded by the Sage Illuminator, the Master of the Secret House. The power to know his guardian spirit was revealed to the new initiate; the method of disentangling his material body from his divine vehicle was explained; and to consummate the *magnum opus*, there was revealed the Divine Name--the secret and unutterable designation of the Supreme Deity, by the very knowledge of which man and his God are made consciously one. With the giving of the Name, the new initiate became himself a *pyramid*, within the chambers of whose soul numberless other human beings might also receive spiritual enlightenment.

In the King's Chamber was enacted the drama of the "second death." Here the candidate, after being crucified upon the cross of the solstices and the equinoxes, was buried in the great coffer. There is a profound mystery to the atmosphere and temperature of the King's Chamber: it is of a peculiar deathlike cold which cuts to the marrow of the bone. This room was a doorway between the material world and the transcendental spheres of Nature. While his body lay in the coffer, the soul of the neophyte soared as a human-headed hawk through the celestial realms, there to discover first hand the eternity of Life, Light, and Truth, as well as the illusion of Death, Darkness, and Sin. Thus in one sense the Great Pyramid may be likened to a gate through which the ancient priests permitted a few to pass toward the attainment of individual completion. It is also to be noted incidentally that if the coffer in the King's Chamber be struck, the sound emitted has no counterpart in any known musical scale. This tonal value may have formed part of that combination of circumstances which rendered the King's Chamber an ideal setting for the conferment of the highest degree of the Mysteries.

The modern world knows little of these ancient rites. The scientist and the theologian alike gaze upon the sacred structure, wondering what fundamental urge inspired the herculean labor. If they would but think for a moment, they would realize that there is only one urge in the soul

of man capable of supplying the required incentive--namely, the desire to know, to understand, and to exchange the narrowness of human mortality for the greater breadth and scope of divine enlightenment. So men say of the Great Pyramid that it is the most perfect building in the world, the source of weights and measures, the original Noah's Ark, the origin of languages, alphabets, and scales of temperature and humidity. Few realize, however, that it is the gateway to the Eternal.

Though the modern world may know a million secrets, the ancient world knew one--and that one was greater than the million; for the *million* secrets breed death, disaster, sorrow, selfishness, lust, and avarice, but the *one* secret confers life, light, and truth. The time will come when the secret wisdom shall again be the dominating religious and philosophical urge of the world. The day is at hand when the doom of dogma shall be sounded. The great theological Tower of Babel, with its confusion of tongues, was built of bricks of mud and the mortar of slime. Out of the cold ashes of lifeless creeds, however, shall rise *phoenixlike* the ancient Mysteries. No other institution has so completely satisfied the religious aspirations of humanity, for since the destruction of the Mysteries there never has been a religious code to which Plato could have subscribed. The unfolding of man's spiritual nature is as much an exact science as astronomy, medicine or jurisprudence. To accomplish this end religions were primarily established; and out of religion have come science, philosophy, and logic as methods whereby this divine purpose might be realized.

The Dying God shall rise again! The secret room in the House of the Hidden Places shall be rediscovered. The Pyramid again shall stand as the ideal emblem of solidarity, inspiration, aspiration, resurrection, and regeneration. As the passing sands of time bury civilization upon civilization beneath their weight, the Pyramid shall remain as the Visible covenant between Eternal Wisdom and the world. The time may yet come when the chants of the illumined shall be heard once more in its ancient passageways and the Master of the Hidden House shall await in the Silent Place for the coming of that man who, casting aside the fallacies of dogma and tenet, seeks simply Truth and will be satisfied with neither substitute nor counterfeit.



## Isis, the Virgin of the World

IT is especially fitting that a study of Hermetic symbolism should begin with a discussion of the symbols and attributes of the *Saitic Isis*. This is the Isis of Sais, famous for the inscription concerning her which appeared on the front of her temple in that city: "*I, Isis, am all that has been, that is or shall be; no mortal Man hath ever me unveiled.*"

Plutarch affirms that many ancient authors believed this goddess to be the daughter of Hermes; others held the opinion that she was the child of Prometheus. Both of these demigods were noted for their divine wisdom. It is not improbable that her kinship to them is merely allegorical. Plutarch translates the name Isis to mean wisdom. Godfrey Higgins, in his *Anacalypsis*, derives the name of Isis from the Hebrew *יִשׁוּ*, *Iso*, and the Greek *ζωω*, to save. Some authorities, however, for example, Richard Payne Knight (as stated in his *Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*), believe the word to be of Northern extraction, possibly Scandinavian or Gothic. In these languages the name is pronounced *Isa*, meaning *ice*, or water in its most passive, crystallized, negative state.

This Egyptian deity under many names appears as the principle of natural fecundity among nearly all the religions of the ancient world. She was known as the goddess with ten thousand appellations and was metamorphosed by Christianity into the Virgin Mary, for Isis, although she gave birth to all living things--chief among them the Sun--still remained a virgin, according to the legendary accounts.

Apuleius in the eleventh book of *The Golden Ass* ascribes to the goddess the following statement concerning her powers and attributes: "Behold, \* \*, I, moved by thy prayers, am present with thee; I, who am Nature, the parent of things, the queen of all the elements, the primordial progeny of ages, the supreme of Divinities, the sovereign of the spirits of the dead, the first of the celestials, and the uniform resemblance of Gods and Goddesses. I, who rule by my nod the luminous summits of the heavens, the salubrious breezes of the sea, and the deplorable silences of the realms beneath, and whose one divinity the whole orb of the earth venerates under a manifold form, by different rites and a variety of appellations. Hence the primogenial Phrygians call me Pessinuntica, the mother of the Gods, the Attic Aborigines, Cecropian Minerva; the floating Cyprians, Paphian Venus; the arrow-bearing

Cretans, Diana Dictynna; the three-tongued Sicilians, Stygian Proserpine; and the Eleusinians, the ancient Goddess Ceres. Some also call me Juno, others Bellona, others Hecate, and others Rhamnusia. And those who are illuminated by the incipient rays of that divinity the Sun, when he rises, viz. the Ethiopians, the Aarii, and the Egyptians skilled in ancient learning, worshipping me by ceremonies perfectly appropriate, call me by my true name, Queen Isis."

Le Plongeon believes that the Egyptian myth of Isis had a historical basis among the Mayas of Central America, where this goddess was known as Queen Moo. In Prince Coh the same author finds a correspondence to Osiris, the brother-husband of Isis. Le Plongeon's theory is that Mayan civilization was far more ancient than that of Egypt. After the death of Prince Coh, his widow, Queen Moo, fleeing to escape the wrath of his murderers, sought refuge among the Mayan colonies in Egypt, where she was accepted as their queen and was given the name of Isis. While Le Plongeon may be right, the possible historical queen sinks into insignificance when compared with the allegorical, symbolic World Virgin; and the fact that she appears among so many different races and peoples discredits the theory that she was a historical individual.

According to Sextus Empyricus, the Trojan war was fought over a statue of the moon goddess. For this lunar Helena, and not for a woman, the Greeks and Trojans struggled at the gates of Troy.

Several authors have attempted to prove that Isis, Osiris, Typhon, Nephthys, and Aroueris (Thoth, or Mercury) were grandchildren of the great Jewish patriarch Noah by his son Ham. But as the story of Noah and his ark is a cosmic allegory concerning the repopulation of planets at the beginning of each world period, this only makes it less likely that they were historical personages. According to Robert Fludd, the sun has three properties--*life*, *light*, and *heat*. These three vivify and vitalize the three worlds--spiritual, intellectual, and material. Therefore, it is said "*from one light, three lights*," i. e. the first three Master Masons. In all probability, Osiris represents the third, or material, aspect of solar activity, which by its beneficent influences vitalizes and enlivens the flora and fauna of the earth. Osiris is not the sun, but the sun is symbolic of the vital principle of Nature, which the ancients knew as Osiris. His symbol, therefore, was an opened eye, in honor of the Great Eye of the universe, the sun. Opposed to the active, radiant principle of impregnating fire, hear, and motion was the passive, receptive principle of Nature.

Modern science has proved that forms ranging in magnitude from solar systems to atoms are composed of positive, radiant nuclei surrounded by negative bodies that exist upon the emanations of the central life. From this allegory we have the story of Solomon and his wives, for Solomon is the sun and his wives and concubines are the planets, moons, asteroids, and other receptive bodies within his house--the solar mansion. Isis, represented in the Song of Solomon by the dark maid of Jerusalem, is symbolic of receptive Nature--the watery, maternal principle which creates all things out of herself after impregnation has been achieved by the virility of the sun.

In the ancient world the year had 360 days. The five extra days were gathered together by the God of Cosmic Intelligence to serve as the birthdays of the five gods and goddesses who are called the sons and daughters of Ham. Upon the first of these special days Osiris was born and upon the fourth of them Isis. (The number *four* shows the relation that this goddess bears to the earth and its elements.) Typhon, the Egyptian Demon or Spirit of the Adversary, was born upon the third day. Typhon is often symbolized by a crocodile; sometimes his body is a combination of crocodile and hog. Isis stands for knowledge and wisdom, and according to Plutarch the word *Typhon* means *insolence* and *pride*. Egotism, self-centeredness, and pride are the deadly enemies of understanding and truth. This part of the allegory is revealed.

After Osiris, here symbolized as the sun, had become King of Egypt and had given to his people the full advantage of his intellectual light, he continued his path through the heavens, visiting the peoples of other nations and converting all with whom he came in contact. Plutarch further asserts that the Greeks recognized in Osiris the same person whom they revered under the names of *Dionysos* and *Bacchus*. While he was away from his country, his brother, Typhon, the Evil One, like the Loki of Scandinavia, plotted against the Sun God to destroy him. Gathering seventy-two persons as fellow conspirators, he attained his nefarious end in a most subtle manner. He had a wonderful ornamented box made just the size of the body of Osiris. This he brought into a banquet hall where the gods and goddesses were feasting together. All admired the beautiful chest, and Typhon promised to give it to the one whose body fitted it most perfectly. One after another lay down in the box, but in disappointment rose again, until at last Osiris also tried. The moment he was in the chest Typhon and his accomplices nailed the cover down and sealed the cracks with molten lead. They then cast the box into the Nile, down which it floated to the sea. Plutarch states that the date upon which this occurred was



ISIS, QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

From Mosaize *Historie der Hebreeuwse Kerke*.

Diodorus writes of a famous inscription carved on a column at Nysa, in Arabia, wherein Isis described herself as follows: "I am Isis, Queen of this country. I was instructed by Mercury. No one can destroy the laws which I have established. I am the eldest daughter of Saturn, most ancient of the gods. I am the wife and sister of Osiris the King. I first made known to mortals the use of wheat. I am the mother of Orus the King. In my honor was the city of Bubaste built. Rejoice, O Egypt, rejoice, land that gave me birth!" (See "Morals and Dogma," by Albert Pike.)

the seventeenth day of the month Athyr, when the sun was in the constellation of Scorpio. This is most significant, for the Scorpion is the symbol of treachery. The time when Osiris entered the chest was also the same season that Noah entered the ark to escape from the Deluge.

Plutarch further declares that the Pans and Satyrs (the Nature spirits and elementals) first discovered that Osiris had been murdered. These immediately raised an alarm, and from this incident the word panic, meaning *fright* or *amazement* of the multitudes, originated. Isis, upon receiving the news of her husband's murder, which she learned from some children who had seen the murderers making off with the box, at once robed herself in mourning and started forth in quest of him.

At length Isis discovered that the chest had floated to the coast of Byblos. There it had lodged in the branches of a tree, which in a short time miraculously grew up around the box. This so amazed the king of that country that he ordered the tree to be cut down and a pillar made

from its trunk to support the roof of his palace. Isis, visiting Byblos, recovered the body of her husband, but it was again stolen by Typhon, who cut it into fourteen parts, which he scattered all over the earth. Isis, in despair, began gathering up the severed remains of her husband, but found only thirteen pieces. The fourteenth part (the phallus) she reproduced in gold, for the original had fallen into the river Nile and had been swallowed by a fish.

Typhon was later slain in battle by the son of Osiris. Some of the Egyptians believed that the souls of the gods were taken to heaven, where they shone forth as stars. It was supposed that the soul of Isis gleamed from the Dog Star, while Typhon became the constellation of the Bear. It is doubtful, however, whether this idea was ever generally accepted.

Among the Egyptians, Isis is often represented with a headdress consisting of the empty throne chair of her murdered husband, and this peculiar structure was accepted during certain dynasties as her hieroglyphic. The headdresses of the Egyptians have great symbolic and emblematic importance, for they represent the auric bodies of the superhuman intelligences, and are used in the same way that the nimbus, halo, and aureole are used in Christian religious art. Frank C. Higgins, a well-known Masonic symbolist, has astutely noted that the ornate headgears of certain gods and Pharaohs are inclined backward at the same angle as the earth's axis. The robes, insignia, jewels, and ornamentations of the ancient hierophants symbolized the spiritual energies radiating from the human body. Modern science is rediscovering many of the lost secrets of Hermetic philosophy. One of these is the ability to gauge the mental development, the soul qualities, and the physical health of an individual from the streamers of semi-visible electric force which pour through the surface of the skin of every human being at all times during his life. (For details concerning a scientific process for making the auric emanations visible, see *The Human Atmosphere* by Dr. Walter J. Kilner.)

Isis is sometimes symbolized by the head of a cow; occasionally the entire animal is her symbol. The first gods of the Scandinavians were licked out of blocks of ice by the Mother Cow (Audhumla), who symbolized the principle of natural nutriment and fecundity because of her milk. Occasionally Isis is represented as a bird. She often carries in one hand the *crux ansata*, the symbol of eternal life, and in the other the flowered scepter, symbolic of her authority.

Thoth Hermes Trismegistus, the founder of Egyptian learning, the Wise Man of the ancient world, gave to the priests and philosophers of antiquity the secrets which have been preserved to this day in myth and legend. These allegories and emblematic figures conceal the secret formulæ for spiritual, mental, moral, and physical regeneration commonly known as the Mystic Chemistry of the Soul (alchemy). These sublime truths were communicated to the initiates of the Mystery Schools, but were concealed from the profane. The latter, unable to understand the abstract philosophical tenets, worshiped the concrete sculptured idols which were emblematic of these secret truths. The wisdom and secrecy of Egypt are epitomized in the Sphinx, which has preserved its secret from the seekers of a hundred generations. The mysteries of Hermeticism, the great spiritual truths hidden from the world by the ignorance of the world, and the keys of the secret doctrines of the ancient philosophers, are all symbolized by the Virgin Isis. Veiled from head to foot, she reveals her wisdom only to the tried and initiated few who have earned the right to enter her sacred presence, tear from the veiled figure of Nature its shroud of obscurity, and stand face to face with the Divine Reality.

The explanations in these pages of the symbols peculiar to the Virgin Isis are based (unless otherwise noted) on selections from a free translation of the fourth book of *Bibliothèque des Philosophes Hermétiques*, entitled "The Hermetical Signification of the Symbols and Attributes of Isis," with interpolations by the compiler to amplify and clarify the text.

The statues of Isis were decorated with the sun, moon, and stars, and many emblems pertaining to the earth, over which Isis was believed to rule (as the guardian spirit of Nature personified). Several images of the goddess have been found upon which the marks of her dignity and position were still intact. According to the ancient philosophers, she personified Universal Nature, the mother of all productions. The deity was generally represented as a partly nude woman, often pregnant, sometimes loosely covered with a garment either of green or black color, or of four different shades intermingled-black, white, yellow, and red.

Apuleius describes her as follows: "In the first place, then, her most copious and long hairs, being gradually intorted, and promiscuously scattered on her divine neck, were softly defluous. A multiform crown, consisting of various flowers, bound the sublime summit of her head. And in the middle of the crown, just on her forehead, there was a smooth orb resembling a mirror, or rather a white refulgent light, which

indicated that she was the moon. Vipers rising up after the manner of furrows, environed the crown on the right hand and on the left, and Cerealian ears of corn were also extended from above. Her garment was of many colours, and woven from the finest flax, and was at one time lucid with a white splendour, at another yellow from the flower of crocus, and at another flaming with a rosy redness. But that which most excessively dazzled my sight, was a very black robe, fulgid with a dark splendour, and which, spreading round and passing under her right side, and ascending to her left shoulder, there rose protuberant like the center of a shield, the dependent part of the robe falling in many folds, and having small knots of fringe, gracefully flowing in its extremities. Glittering stars were dispersed through the embroidered border of the robe, and through the whole of its surface: and the full moon, shining in the middle of the stars, breathed forth flaming fires. Nevertheless, a crown, wholly consisting of flowers and fruits of every kind, adhered with indivisible connexion to the border of that conspicuous robe, in all its undulating motions. What she carried in her hands also consisted of things of a very different nature. For her right hand, indeed, bore a brazen rattle [sistrum] through the narrow lamina of which bent like a belt, certain rods passing, produced a sharp triple sound, through the vibrating motion of her arm. An oblong vessel, in the shape of a boat, depended from her left hand, on the handle of which, in that part in which it was conspicuous, an asp raised its erect head and largely swelling neck. And shoes woven from the leaves of the victorious palm tree covered her immortal feet."

The green color alludes to the vegetation which covers the face of the earth, and therefore represents the robe of Nature. The black represents death and corruption as being the way to a new life and generation. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3.) White, yellow, and red signify the three principal colors of the alchemical, Hermetical, universal medicine after the blackness of its putrefaction is over.

The ancients gave the name Isis to one of their occult medicines; therefore the description here given relates somewhat to chemistry. Her black drape also signifies that the moon, or the lunar humidity--the sophic universal mercury and the operating substance of Nature in alchemical terminology--has no light of its own, but receives its light, its fire, and its vitalizing force from the sun. Isis was



THE SISTRUM.

"The sistrum is designed \*\*\* to represent to us, that every thing must be kept in continual agitation, and never cease from motion; that they ought to be mused and well-shaken, whenever they begin to grow drowsy as it were, and to droop in their motion. For, say they, the sound of these sistra averts and drives away Typho; meaning hereby, that as corruption clogs and puts a stop to the regular course of nature; so generation, by the means of motion, loosens it again, and restores it to its former vigour. Now the outer surface of this instrument is of a convex figure, as within its circumference are contained those four chords or bars [only three shown], which make such a rattling when they are shaken--nor is this without its meaning; for that part of the universe which is subject to generation and corruption is contained within the sphere of the moon; and whatever motions or changes may happen therein, they are all effected by the different combinations of the four elementary bodies, fire, earth, water, and air--moreover, upon the upper part of the convex surface of the sistrum is carved the effigies of a cat with a human visage, as on the lower edge of it, under those moving chords, is engraved on the one side the face of Isis, and on the other that of Nephthys--by the faces symbolically representing generation and corruption (which, as has been already observed, is nothing but the motion and alteration of the four elements one amongst another),"

(From Plutarch's *Isis and Osiris*.)

the image or representative of the Great Works of the wise men: the Philosopher's Stone, the Elixir of Life, and the Universal Medicine.

Other hieroglyphics seen in connection with Isis are no less curious than those already described, but it is impossible to enumerate all, for many symbols were used interchangeably by the Egyptian Hermetists. The goddess often wore upon her head a hat made of cypress branches, to signify mourning for her dead husband and also for the physical death which she caused every creature to undergo in order to receive a new life in posterity or a periodic resurrection. The head of Isis is sometimes ornamented with a crown of gold or a garland of olive leaves, as conspicuous marks of her sovereignty as queen of the world and



mistress of the entire universe. The crown of gold signifies also the aurific unctuousity or sulphurous fatness of the solar and vital fires which she dispenses to every individual by a continual circulation of the elements, this circulation being symbolized by the musical rattle which she carries in her hand. This sistrum is also the yonic symbol of purity.

A serpent interwoven among the olive leaves on her head, devouring its own tail, denotes that the aurific unctuousity was soiled with the venom of terrestrial corruption which surrounded it and must be mortified and purified by seven planetary circulations or purifications called *flying eagles* (alchemical terminology) in order to make it medicinal for the restoration of health. (Here the emanations from the sun are recognized as a medicine for the healing of human ills.) The seven planetary circulations are represented by the circumambulations of the Masonic lodge; by the marching of the Jewish priests seven times around the walls of Jericho, and of the Mohammedan priests seven times around the Kabba at Mecca. From the crown of gold project three horns of plenty, signifying the abundance of the gifts of Nature proceeding from one root having its origin in the heavens (head of Isis).

In this figure the pagan naturalists represent all the vital powers of the three kingdoms and families of sublunary nature—mineral, plant, and animal (man considered as an animal). At one of her ears was the moon and at the other the sun, to indicate that these two were the agent and patient, or father and mother principles of all natural objects; and that Isis, or Nature, makes use of these two luminaries to communicate her powers to the whole empire of animals, vegetables, and minerals. On the back of her neck were the characters of the planets and the signs of the zodiac which assisted the planets in their functions. This signified that the heavenly influences directed the destinies of the principles and sperms of all things, because they were the governors of all sublunary bodies, which they transformed into little worlds made in the image of the greater universe.

Isis holds in her right hand a small sailing ship with the spindle of a spinning wheel for its mast. From the top of the mast projects a water jug, its handle shaped like a serpent swelled with venom. This indicates that Isis steers the bark of life, full of troubles and miseries, on the stormy ocean of Time. The spindle symbolizes the fact that she spins and cuts the thread of Life. These emblems further signify that Isis abounds in humidity, by means of which she nourishes all natural bodies, preserving them from the heat of the sun by humidifying them

with nutritious moisture from the atmosphere. Moisture supports vegetation, but this subtle humidity (life ether) is always more or less infected by some venom proceeding from corruption or decay. It must be purified by being brought into contact with the invisible cleansing fire of Nature. This fire digests, perfects, and revitalizes this substance, in order that the humidity may become a universal medicine to heal and renew all the bodies in Nature.

The serpent throws off its skin annually and is thereby renewed (symbolic of the resurrection of the spiritual life from the material nature). This renewal of the earth takes place every spring, when the vivifying spirit of the sun returns to the countries of the Northern Hemisphere,

The symbolic Virgin carries in her left hand a sistrum and a cymbal, or square frame of metal, which when struck gives the key-note of Nature (Fa); sometimes also an olive branch, to indicate the harmony she preserves among natural things with her regenerating power. By the processes of death and corruption she gives life to a number of creatures of diverse forms through periods of perpetual change. The cymbal is made square instead of the usual triangular shape in order to symbolize that all things are transmuted and regenerated according to the harmony of the four elements.

Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom believed that if a physician could establish harmony among the elements of earth, fire, air, and water, and unite them into a stone (the Philosopher's Stone) symbolized by the six-pointed star or two interlaced triangles, he would possess the means of healing all disease. Dr. Bacstrom further stated that there was no doubt in his mind that the universal, omnipresent fire (spirit) of Nature: "does all and is all in all." By attraction, repulsion, motion, heat, sublimation, evaporation, exsiccation, inspissation, coagulation, and fixation, the Universal Fire (Spirit) manipulates matter, and manifests throughout creation. Any individual who can understand these principles and adapt them to the three departments of Nature becomes a true philosopher.

From the right breast of Isis protruded a bunch of grapes and from, the left an ear of corn or a sheaf of wheat, golden in color. These indicate that Nature is the source of nutrition for plant, animal, and human life, nourishing all things from herself. The golden color in the wheat (corn)

indicates that in the sunlight or spiritual gold is concealed the first sperm of all life.

On the girdle surrounding the upper part of the body of the statue appear a number of mysterious emblems. The girdle is joined together in front by four golden plates (the elements), placed in the form of a square. This signified that Isis, or Nature, the first matter (alchemical terminology), was the essence- of the four elements (life, light, heat, and force), which quintessence generated all things. Numerous stars are represented on this girdle, thereby indicating their influence in darkness as well as the influence of the sun in light. Isis is the Virgin immortalized in the constellation of Virgo, where the World Mother is placed with the serpent under her feet and a crown. of stars on her head. In her arms she carries a sheaf of grain and sometimes the young Sun God.

The statue of Isis was placed on a pedestal of dark stone ornamented with rams' heads. Her feet trod upon a number of venomous reptiles. This indicates that Nature has power to free from acidity or saltiness all corrosives and to overcome all impurities from terrestrial corruption adhering to bodies. The rams' heads indicate that the most auspicious time for the generation of life is during the period when the sun passes through the sign of Aries. The serpents under her feet indicate that Nature is inclined to preserve life and to heal disease by expelling impurities and corruption.

In this sense the axioms known to the ancient philosophers are verified; namely:

*Nature contains Nature,  
Nature rejoices in her own nature,  
Nature surmounts Nature;  
Nature cannot be amended but in her own nature.*

Therefore, in contemplating the statue of Isis, we must not lose sight of the occult sense of its allegories; otherwise, the Virgin remains an inexplicable enigma.

From a golden ring on her left arm a line descends, to the end of which is suspended a deep box filled with flaming coals and incense. Isis, or Nature personified, carries with her the sacred fire, religiously preserved and kept burning in. a special temple by the vestal virgins.

This fire is the genuine, immortal flame of Nature--ethereal, essential, the author of life. The inconsumable oil; the balsam of life, so much praised by the wise and so often referred to in the Scriptures, is frequently symbolized as the fuel of this immortal flame.

From the right arm of the figure also descends a thread, to the end of which is fastened a pair of scales, to denote the exactitude of Nature in her weights and measures. Isis is often represented as the symbol of justice, because Nature is eternally consistent.



THOTH, THE DOG-HEADED.

From Lenoir's *La Franche-Maconnerie*.

Aroueris, or Thoth, one of the five immortals, protected the infant Horus from the wrath of Typhon after the murder of Osiris. He also revised the ancient Egyptian calendar by increasing the year from 360 days to 365. Thoth Hermes was called "The Dog-Headed" because of his faithfulness and integrity. He is shown crowned with a solar nimbus, carrying in one hand the Crux Ansata, the symbol of eternal life, and in the other a serpent-wound staff symbolic of his dignity as counselor of the gods.



THE EGYPTIAN MADONNA.

Isis is shown with her son Horus in her arms. She is crowned with the lunar orb, ornamented with the horns of rams or bulls. Orus, or Horus as he is more generally known, was the son of Isis and Osiris. He was the god of time, hours, days, and this narrow span of life recognized as mortal existence. In all probability, the four sons of Horus represent the four kingdoms of Nature. It was Horus who finally avenged the murder of his father, Osiris, by slaying Typhon, the spirit of Evil.

The World Virgin is sometimes shown standing between two great pillars--the Jachin and Boaz of Freemasonry--symbolizing the fact that Nature attains productivity by means of polarity. As wisdom personified, Isis stands between the pillars of opposites, demonstrating that understanding is always found at the point of equilibrium and that truth is often crucified between the two thieves of apparent contradiction.

The sheen of gold in her dark hair indicates that while she is lunar, her power is due to the sun's rays, from which she secures her ruddy complexion. As the moon is robed in the reflected light of the sun, so Isis, like the virgin of Revelation, is clothed in the glory of solar luminosity. Apuleius states that while he was sleeping he beheld the venerable goddess Isis rising out of the ocean. The ancients realized that the primary forms of life first came out of water, and modern science concurs in this view. H. G. Wells, in his *Outline of History*, describing primitive life on the earth, states: "But though the ocean and intertidal water already swarmed with life, the land above the high-tide line was still, so far as we can guess, a stony wilderness without a trace of life." In the next chapter he adds: "Wherever the shore-line ran there was life, and that life went on in and by and with water as its home, its medium, and its fundamental necessity." The ancients believed that the universal sperm proceeded from warm vapor, humid but fiery. The veiled Isis, whose very coverings represent vapor, is symbolic of this humidity, which is the carrier or vehicle for the sperm life of the sun, represented by a child in her arms. Because the sun, moon, and stars in setting appear to sink into the sea and also because the water receives their rays into itself, the sea was believed to be the breeding ground for the sperm of living things. This sperm is generated from the combination of the influences of the celestial bodies; hence Isis is sometimes represented as pregnant.

Frequently the statue of Isis was accompanied by the figure of a large black and white ox. The ox represents either Osiris as Taurus, the bull of the zodiac, or Apis, an animal sacred to Osiris because of its peculiar markings and colorings. Among the Egyptians, the bull was a beast of burden. Hence the presence of the animal was a reminder of the labors patiently performed by Nature that all creatures may have life and health. Harpocrates, the God of Silence, holding his fingers to his mouth, often accompanies the statue of Isis. He warns all to keep the secrets of the wise from those unfit to know them.

The Druids of Britain and Gaul had a deep knowledge concerning the mysteries of Isis and worshiped her under the symbol of the moon. Godfrey Higgins considers it a mistake to regard Isis as synonymous with the moon. The moon was chosen for Isis because of its dominion over water. The Druids considered the sun to be the father and the moon the mother of all things. By means of these symbols they worshiped Universal Nature.

The figure of Isis is sometimes used to represent the occult and magical arts, such as necromancy, invocation, sorcery, and thaumaturgy. In one of the myths concerning her, Isis is said to have conjured the invincible God of Eternities, *Ra*, to tell her his secret and sacred name, which he did. This name is equivalent to the Lost Word of Masonry. By means of this Word, a magician can demand obedience from the invisible and superior deities. The priests of Isis became adepts in the use of the unseen forces of Nature. They understood hypnotism, mesmerism, and similar practices long before the modern world dreamed of their existence.

Plutarch describes the requisites of a follower of Isis in this manner: "For as 'tis not the length of the beard, or the coarseness of the habit which makes a philosopher, so neither will those frequent shavings, or the mere wearing [of] a linen vestment constitute a votary of Isis; but he alone is a true servant or follower of this Goddess, who after he has heard, and been made acquainted in a proper manner with the history of the actions of these Gods, searches into the hidden truths which he concealed under them, and examines the whole by the dictates of reason and philosophy."

During the Middle Ages the troubadours of Central Europe preserved in song the legends of this Egyptian goddess. They composed sonnets to the most beautiful woman in all the world. Though few ever discovered

her identity, she was Sophia, the Virgin of Wisdom, whom all the philosophers of the world have wooed. Isis represents the mystery of motherhood, which the ancients recognized as the most apparent proof of Nature's omniscient wisdom and God's overshadowing power. To the modern seeker she is the epitome of the Great Unknown, and only those who unveil her will be able to solve the mysteries of life, death, generation, and regeneration.

## MUMMIFICATION OF THE EGYPTIAN DEAD

Servius, commenting on Virgil's *Æneid*, observes that "the wise Egyptians took care to embalm their bodies, and deposit them in catacombs, in order that the soul might be preserved for a long time in connection with the body, and might not soon be alienated; while the Romans, with an opposite design, committed the remains of their dead to the funeral pile, intending that the vital spark might immediately be restored to the general element, or return to its pristine nature." (From Prichard's *An Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology*.)

No complete records are available which give the secret doctrine of the Egyptians concerning the relationship existing between the spirit, or consciousness, and the body which it inhabited. It is reasonably certain, however, that Pythagoras, who had been initiated in the Egyptian temples, when he promulgated the doctrine of metempsychosis, restated, in part at least, the teachings of the Egyptian initiates. The popular supposition that the Egyptians mummified their dead in order to preserve the form for a physical resurrection is untenable in the light of modern knowledge regarding their philosophy of death. In the fourth book of *On Abstinence from Animal Food*, Porphyry describes an Egyptian custom of purifying the dead by removing the contents of the abdominal cavity, which they placed in a separate chest. He then reproduces the following oration which had been translated out of the Egyptian tongue by Euphantus: "O sovereign Sun, and all ye Gods who impart life to men, receive me, and deliver me to the eternal Gods as a cohabitant. For I have always piously worshipped those divinities which were pointed out to me by my parents as long as I lived in this age, and have likewise always honored those who procreated my body. And, with respect to other men, I have never slain any one, nor defrauded any one of what he deposited with me, nor have I committed any other atrocious deed. If, therefore, during my life I have acted erroneously, by eating or drinking things which it is unlawful to eat or drink, I have not erred through myself, but through these" (pointing to the chest which contained the viscera). The removal of the organs

identified as the seat of the appetites was considered equivalent to the purification of the body from their evil influences.

So literally did the early Christians interpret their Scriptures that they preserved the bodies of their dead by pickling them in salt water, so that on the day of resurrection the spirit of the dead might reenter a complete and perfectly preserved body. Believing that the incisions necessary to the embalming process and the removal of the internal organs would prevent the return of the spirit to its body, the Christians buried their dead without resorting to the more elaborate mummification methods employed by the Egyptian morticians.

In his work on *Egyptian Magic*, S.S.D.D. hazards the following speculation concerning the esoteric purposes behind the practice of mummification. "There is every reason to suppose," he says, "that only those who had received some grade of initiation were mummified; for it is certain that, in the eyes of the Egyptians, mummification effectually prevented reincarnation. Reincarnation was necessary to imperfect souls, to those who had failed to pass the tests of initiation; but for those who had the Will and the capacity to enter the Secret Adytum, there was seldom necessity for that liberation of the soul which is said to be effected by the destruction of the body. The body of the Initiate was therefore preserved after death as a species of Talisman or material basis for the manifestation of the Soul upon earth."

During the period of its inception mummification was limited to the Pharaoh and such other persons of royal rank as presumably partook of the attributes of the great Osiris, the divine, mummified King of the Egyptian Underworld.



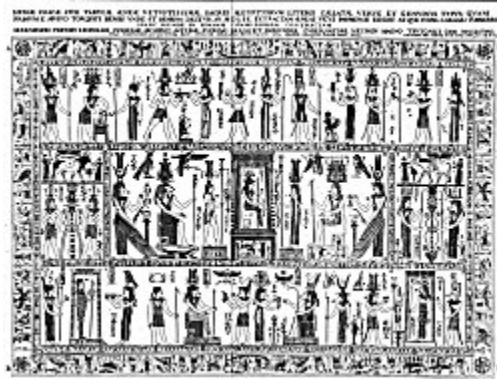


OSIRIS, KING OF THE UNDERWORLD.

Osiris is often represented with the lower part of his body enclosed in a mummy case or wrapped about with funeral bandages. Man's spirit consists of three distinct parts, only one of which incarnates in physical form. The human body was considered to be a tomb or sepulcher of this incarnating spirit. Therefore Osiris, a symbol of the incarnating ego, was represented with the lower half of his body mummified to indicate that he was the living spirit of man enclosed within the material form symbolized by the mummy case.

There is a romance between the active principle of God and the passive principle of Nature. From the union of these two principles is produced the rational creation. Man is a composite creature. From his Father (the active principle) he inherits his Divine Spirit, the fire of aspiration--that immortal part of himself which rises triumphant from the broken clay of mortality: that part which remains after the natural organisms have disintegrated or have been regenerated. From his Mother (the passive principle) he inherits his body--that part over which the laws of Nature have control: his humanity, his mortal personality, his appetites, his feelings, and his emotions. The Egyptians also believed that Osiris was the river Nile and that Isis (his sister-wife) was the contiguous land, which, when inundated by the river, bore fruit and harvest. The murky water of the Nile were believed to account for the blackness of Osiris, who was generally symbolized as being of ebony hue.

## The Bembine Table of Isis



THE BEMBINE TABLE OF ISIS.

Concerning the theurgic or magic sense in which the Egyptian priests exhibited in the Bembine Table of Isis the philosophy of sacrifice, rites, and ceremonies by a system of occult symbols, Athanasius Kircher writes:

"The early priests believed that a great spiritual power was invoked by correct and unabridged sacrificial ceremonies. If one feature were lacking, the whole was vitiated, says Iamblichus. Hence they were most careful in all details, for they considered it absolutely essential for the entire chain of logical connections to be exactly according to ritual. Certainly for no other reason did they prepare and prescribe for future use the manuals, as it were, for conducting the rites. They learned, too, what the first hieromancers--possessed, as it were, by a divine fury--devised as a system of symbolism for exhibiting their mysteries. These they placed in this Tablet of Isis, before the eyes of those admitted to the sanctum sanctorum in order to teach the nature of the Gods and the prescribed forms of sacrifice. Since each of the orders of Gods had its own peculiar symbols, gestures, costumes, and ornaments, they thought it necessary to observe these in the whole apparatus of worship, as nothing was more efficacious in drawing the benign attention of the deities and genii. \* \* \* Thus their temples, remote from the usual haunts of men, contained representations of nearly every form in nature. First, in the pavement, they symbolized the physical economy of the world, using minerals, stones and other things suitable for ornaments, including little streams of water. The walls showed the starry world, and the dome the world of genii. In the center was the altar, to suggest the emanations of the Supreme Mind from its center. Thus the entire interior constituted a picture of the Universe of Worlds. The priests in making sacrifices wore raiment adorned with figures similar to those attributed to the Gods. Their bodies were partially bare like those of the deities, and they themselves were divested of all material cares and practices the

strictest chastity. \* \* \* Their heads were veiled to indicate their charge of earthly things. Their heads and bodies were shaved, for they regarded hair as a useless excrescence. Upon the head they bore the same insignia as those attributed to the Gods. Thus arrayed, they regarded themselves to be transformed into that intelligence with which they constantly desired to be identified. For example, in order to call down to the world the soul and spirit of the Universe, they stood before the image shown in the center of our Tablet, wearing the same symbols as that figure and its attendants, and offered sacrifices. By these and the accompanying singing of hymns they believed that they infallibly drew the God's attention to their prayer. And so they did in regard to other regions of the Tablet, believing of necessity the proper ritual properly carried out would evoke the deity desired. That this was the origin of the science of oracles is apparent. As a touched chord produces a harmony of sound, likewise the adjoining chords respond though not touched. Similarly the idea they expressed by their concurrent acts while adoring the God came into accord with basic Idea and, by an intellectual union, it was returned to them deformed, and they thus obtained the Idea of Ideas. Hence there sprang up in their souls, they thought, the gift of prophecy and divination, and they believed they could foretell future events, impending evils, etc. For as in the Supreme Mind everything is simultaneous and spaceless, the future is therefore present in that Mind; and they thought that while the human mind was absorbed in the Supreme by contemplation, by that union they were enabled to know all the future. Nearly all that is represented in our Tablet consists of amulets which, by analogy above described, would inspire them, under the described conditions, with the virtues of the Supreme Power and enable them to receive good and avert evil. They also believed they could in this magical manner effect cures of diseases; that genii could be induced to appear to them during sleep and cure or teach them to cure the sick. In this belief they consulted the Gods about all sort of doubts and difficulties, while adorned with the simulacra of the mystic rite and intently contemplating the Divine Ideas; and while so enraptured they believed the God by some sign, nod or gesture communicated with them, whether asleep or awake, concerning the truth or falsity of the matter in point." (See *Cedipus Ægyptiacus*.)

A MANUSCRIPT by Thomas Taylor contains the following remarkable paragraph:

"Plato was initiated into the 'Greater Mysteries' at the age of 49. The initiation took place in one of the subterranean halls of the Great Pyramid in Egypt. The ISIAK TABLE formed the altar, before which the Divine Plato stood and received that which was always his, but which the ceremony of the Mysteries enkindled and brought from its dormant state. With this ascent, after three days in the Great Hall, he was received by the Hierophant of the Pyramid (the Hierophant was seen only by those who had passed the three days, the three degrees, the three dimensions) and given verbally the Highest Esoteric Teachings, each accompanied with Its appropriate Symbol. After a further three

months' sojourn in the halls of the Pyramid, the Initiate Plato was sent out into the world to do the work of the Great Order, as Pythagoras and Orpheus had been before him."

Before the sacking of Rome in 1527 there is no historical mention of the *Mensa Isiaca*, (Tablet of Isis). At that time the Tablet came into the possession of a certain locksmith or ironworker, who sold it at an exorbitant price to Cardinal Bembo, a celebrated antiquary, historiographer of the Republic of Venice, and afterwards librarian of St. Mark's. After his death in 1547 the Isiac Tablet was acquired by the House of Mantua, in whose museum it remained until 1630, when troops of Ferdinand II captured the city of Mantua. Several early writers on the subject have assumed that the Tablet was demolished by the ignorant soldiery for the silver it contained. The assumption, however, was erroneous. The Tablet fell into the hands of Cardinal Pava, who presented it to the Duke of Savoy, who in turn presented it to the King of Sardinia. When the French conquered Italy in 1797 the Tablet was carried to Paris. In 1809, Alexandre Lenoir, writing of the *Mensa Isiaca*, said it was on exhibition at the Bibliothèque Nationale. Upon the establishment of peace between the two countries it was returned to Italy. In his Guide to Northern Italy, Karl Baedeker describes the *Mensa Isiaca* as being in the center of Gallery 2 in the Museum of Antiquities at Turin.

A faithful reproduction of the original Tablet was made in 1559 by the celebrated Æneas Vicus of Parma, and a copy of the engraving was given by the Chancellor of the Duke of Bavaria to the Museum of Hieroglyphics. Athanasius Kircher describes the Tablet as "five palms long and four wide." W. Wynn Westcott says it measures 50 by 30 inches. It was made of bronze and decorated with encaustic or smalt enamel and silver inlay. Fosbroke adds: "The figures are cut very shallow, and the contour of most of them is encircled by threads of silver. The bases upon which the figures were seated or reclined, and left blank in the prints, were of silver and are torn away." (See *Encyclopædia of Antiquities*.)

Those familiar with the fundamental principles of Hermetic philosophy will recognize in the *Mensa Isiaca* the key to Chaldean, Egyptian, and Greek theology. In his *Antiquities*, the learned Benedictine, Father Montfaucon, admits his inability to cope with the intricacies of its symbolism. He therefore doubts that the emblems upon the Tablet possess any significance worthy of consideration and ridicules Kircher, declaring him to be more obscure than the Tablet itself. Laurentius

Pignorius reproduced the Tablet in connection with a descriptive essay in 1605, but his timidly advanced explanations demonstrated his ignorance concerning the actual interpretation of the figures.

In his *Cedipus Ægyptiacus*, published in 1654, Kircher attacked the problem with characteristic avidity. Being peculiarly qualified for such a task by years of research in matters pertaining to the secret doctrines of antiquity, and with the assistance of a group of eminent scholars, Kircher accomplished much towards an exposition of the mysteries of the Tablet. The master secret, however, eluded even him, as Eliphas Levi has shrewdly noted in his *History of Magic*.

"The learned Jesuit, " writes Levi, "divined that it contained the hieroglyphic key to sacred alphabets, though he was unable to develop the explanation. It is divided into three equal compartments; above are the twelve houses of heaven and below are the corresponding distributions of labor [work periods] throughout the year, while in the middle place are twenty-one sacred signs answering to the letters of the alphabet. In the midst of all is a seated figure of the pantomorphic IYNX, emblem of universal being and corresponding as such to the Hebrew *Yod*, or to that unique letter from which all the other letters were formed. The IYNX is encircled by the Ophite triad, answering to the Three Mother Letters of the Egyptian and Hebrew alphabets. On the right are the Ibimorphic and Serapian triads; on the left are those of Nephtys and Hecate, representing active and passive, fixed and volatile, fructifying fire and generating water. Each pair of triads in conjunction with the center produces a septenary, and a septenary is contained in the center. The three septenaries furnish the absolute number of the three worlds, as well as the complete number of primitive letters, to which a complementary sign is added, like zero to the nine numerals."

Levi's hint may be construed to mean that the twenty-one figures in the center section of the Table represent the twenty-one major trumps of the Tarot cards. If this be so, is not the zero card, cause of so much controversy, the nameless crown of the Supreme Mind, the crown being symbolized by the hidden triad in the upper part of the throne in the center of the Table? Might not the first emanation of this Supreme Mind be well symbolized by a juggler or magician with the symbols of the four lower worlds spread out on a table before him: the rod, the sword, the cup, and the coin? Thus considered, the zero card belongs nowhere among the others but is in fact the fourth dimensional point from which they all emanated and consequently is broken up into the twenty-one cards (letters) which, when gathered together, produce the zero. The

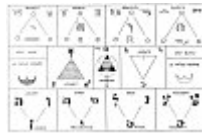
cipher appearing upon this card would substantiate this interpretation, for the cipher, or circle, is emblematic of the superior sphere from which issue the lower worlds, powers, and letters.

Westcott carefully collected the all too meager theories advanced by various authorities and in 1887 published his now extremely rare volume, which contains the only detailed description of the Isiac Tablet published in English since Humphreys translated Montfaucon's worthless description in 1721. After explaining his reticence to reveal that which Levi evidently felt was better left concealed, Westcott sums up his interpretation of the Tablet as follows:

"The diagram of Levi, by which he explains the mystery of the Tablet, shows the Upper Region divided into the four seasons of the year, each with three signs of the Zodiac, and he has added the four-lettered sacred name, the Tetragrammaton, assigning Jod to Aquarius, that is Canopus, He to Taurus, that is Apis, Vau to Leo, that is Momphta, and He final to Typhon. Note the Cherubic parallel--Man, Bull, Lion and Eagle. The fourth form is found either as Scorpion or Eagle depending upon the Occult good or evil intention: in the Demotic Zodiac, the Snake replaces the Scorpion.

"The Lower Region he ascribes to the twelve *simple* Hebrew letters, associating them with the four quarters of the horizon. Compare the Sepher Yezirah, Cap. v., sec. 1.

"The Central Region he ascribes to the Solar powers and the



LEVI'S KEY TO THE BEMBINE TABLE.

From Levi's *History of Magic*.

"The Isiac Tablet, writes Levi, is a Key to the Ancient Book of Thoth, which has survived to some extent the lapse of centuries and is pictured to us in the still comparatively ancient set of Tarocchi Cards. To him the Book of Thoth was a résumé of the esoteric learning of the Egyptians, after the decadence of their civilization, this lore became crystallized in a hieroglyphic form as the Tarot; this

Tarot having become partially or entirely forgotten or misunderstood, its pictured symbols fell into the hands of the sham diviners, and of the providers of the public amusement by games of Cards. The modern Tarot, or Tarocchi pack of cards consists of 78 cards, of which 22 form a special group of trumps, of pictorial design: the remaining 56 are composed of four suits of 10 numerals and four court cards, King, Queen, Knight, and Knave or Valet; the suits are Swords (Militaryism), Cups (Sacerdocy), Clubs or Wands (Agriculture), and Shekels or Coins (Commerce), answering respectively to our Spades, Hearts, Clubs and Diamonds. Our purpose is with the 22 trumps, these form the special characteristic of the Pack and are the lineal descendants of the Hieroglyphics of the Tarot. These 22 respond to the letters of the Hebrew and other sacred alphabets, which fall naturally into three classes of a Trio of Mothers, a Heptad of doubles, and a duodecad of simple letters. They are also considered as a triad of Heptads and one apart, a system of Initiation and an Uninitiate." (See Westcott's *The Isiac Tablet*.)

Planetary. In the middle we see above, the Sun, marked Ops, and below it is a Solomon's Seal, above a cross; a double triangle Hexapla, one light and one dark triangle superposed, the whole forming a sort of complex symbol of Venus. To the Ibimorphos he gives the three dark planets, Venus, Mercury, and Mars placed around a dark triangle erect, denoting Fire. To the Nephthæan triad he gives three light planets, Saturn, Luna, and Jupiter, around a light inverted triangle which denotes Water. There is a necessary connection between water, female power, passive principle, Binah, and Sephirotic Mother, and Bride. (See the *Kabbalah* by Mathers.) Note the ancient signs for the planets were all composed of a Cross, Solar Disc and Crescent: Venus is a cross below a Sun disc, Mercury, a disc With a crescent above and cross below, Saturn is a Cross whose lowest point touches the apex of the crescent; Jupiter is a Crescent whose lowest point touches the left hand end of a cross: all these are deep mysteries. Note that Levi in his original plate transposed Serapis and Hecate, but not the Apis noir and Apis blanc, perhaps because of the head of Bes being associated by him with Hecate. Note that having referred the 12 simple letters to the lower, the 7 double must correspond to the central region of the planets, and then the great triad A.M.S. the mother letters representing Air, Water, and Fire remain to be pictured, around S the Central lynx, or Yod, by the Ophionian Triad the two Serpents and the Leonine Sphynx. Levi's word OPS in the centre is the Latin Ops, Terra, genius of the Earth; and the Greek Ops, Rhea, or Kubele (Cybele) often drawn as a goddess seated in a chariot drawn by lions; she is crowned with turrets, and holds a Key." (See *The Isiac Tablet*.)

The essay published in French by Alexandre Lenoir in 1809, while curious and original, contains little real information on the Tablet, which the author seeks to prove was an Egyptian calendar or astrological chart. As both Montfaucon and Lenoir--in fact all writers on the subject since 1651--either have based their work upon that of Kircher or have been influenced considerably by him, a careful translation has been made of the latter's original article (eighty pages of seventeenth century Latin). The double-page plate at the beginning of this chapter is a faithful reproduction made by Kircher from the engraving in the Museum of Hieroglyphics. The small letters and numbers used to designate the figures were added by him to clarify his commentary and will be used for the same purpose in this work.

Like nearly all religious and philosophical antiquities, the Bembine Table of Isis has been the subject of much controversy. In a footnote, A. E. Waite--unable to differentiate between the true and the purported nature or origin of the Tablet--echoes the sentiments of J.G. Wilkinson, another eminent *exotericus*: "The original [Table] is exceedingly late and is roughly termed a forgery." On the other hand, Eduard Winkelman, a man of profound learning, defends the genuineness and antiquity of the Tablet. A sincere consideration of the Mensa Isiaca discloses one fact of paramount importance: that although whoever fashioned the Table was not necessarily an Egyptian, he was an initiate of the highest order, conversant with the most arcane tenets of Hermetic esotericism.

## **SYMBOLISM OF THE BEMBINE TABLE**

The following necessarily brief elucidation of the Bembine Table is based upon a digest of the writings of Kircher supplemented by other information gleaned by the present author from the mystical writings of the Chaldeans, Hebrews, Egyptians, and Greeks. The temples of the Egyptians were so designed that the arrangement of chambers, decorations, and utensils was all of symbolic significance, as shown by the hieroglyphics that covered them. Beside the altar, which usually was in the center of each room, was the cistern of Nile water which flowed in and out through unseen pipes. Here also were images of the gods in concatenated series, accompanied by magical inscriptions. In these temples, by use of symbols and hieroglyphics, neophytes were instructed in the secrets of the sacerdotal caste.

The Tablet of Isis was originally a table or altar, and its emblems were part of the mysteries explained by priests. Tables were dedicated to the



various gods and goddesses; in this case Isis was so honored. The substances from which the tables were made differed according to the relative dignities of the deities. The tables consecrated to Jupiter and Apollo were of gold; those to Diana, Venus, and Juno were of silver; those to the other superior gods, of marble; those to the lesser divinities, of wood. Tables were also made of metals corresponding to the planets governed by the various celestials. As food for the body is spread on a banquet table, so on these sacred altars were spread the symbols which, when understood, feed the invisible nature of man.

In his introduction to the Table, Kircher summarizes its symbolism thus: "It teaches, in the first place, the whole constitution of the threefold world--archetypal, intellectual, and sensible. The Supreme Divinity is shown moving from the center to the circumference of a universe made up of both sensible and inanimate things, all of which are animated and agitated by the one supreme power which they call the *Father Mind* and represented by a threefold symbol. Here also are shown three triads from the Supreme One, each manifesting one attribute of the first Trimurti. These triads are called the *Foundation*, or the base of all things. In the Table is also set forth the arrangement and distribution of those divine creatures that aid the Father Mind in the control of the universe. Here [in the upper panel] are to be seen the Governors of the worlds, each with its fiery, ethereal, and material insignia. Here also [in the lower panel] are the *Fathers of Fountains*, whose duty it is to care for and preserve the principles of all things and sustain the inviolable laws of Nature. Here are the gods of the spheres and also those who wander from place to place, laboring with all substances and forms (Zonia and Azonia), grouped together as figures of both sexes, with their faces turned to their superior deity."

The *Mensa Isiaca*, which is divided horizontally into three chambers or panels, may represent the ground plan of the chambers in which the Isiac Mysteries were given. The center panel is divided into seven parts or lesser rooms, and the lower has two gates, one at each end. The entire Table contains forty-five figures of first importance and a number of lesser symbols. The forty-five main figures are grouped into fifteen triads, of which four are in the upper panel, seven in the central, and four in the lower. According to both Kircher and Levi, the triads are divided in the following manner:

*In the upper section*

1. P, S, V--Mendesian Triad.
2. X, Z, A--Ammonian Triad.
3. B, C, D--Momphtæan Triad.
4. F, G, H--Omphtæan Triad.

*In the center section*

1. G, I, K--Isiac Triad.
2. L, M, N--Hecatine Triad.
3. O, Q, R--Ibimorphous Triad.
4. V, S, W--Ophionic Triad.
5. X, Y, Z--Nephtæan Triad.
6. ζ, η, θ--Serapæan Triad.
7. γ, δ (not shown), ε--Osirian Triad.

*In the lower section*

1. λ, M, N--Horæan Triad.
2. ξ, O, Σ--Pandochæan Triad.
3. T, Φ, X--Thaustic Triad.
4. Ψ, F, H--Æluristic Triad.

Of these fifteen triads Kircher writes: "The figures differ from each other in eight highly important respects, i. e., according to form, position, gesture, act, raiment, headdress, staff, and, lastly, according to the hieroglyphics placed around them, whether these be flowers, shrubs, small letters or animals." These eight symbolic methods of portraying

the secret powers of the figures are subtle reminders of the eight spiritual senses of cognition by means of which the Real Self in man may be comprehended. To express this spiritual truth the Buddhists used the wheel with eight spokes and raised their consciousness by means of the noble eightfold path. The ornamented border enclosing the three main panels of the Table contains many symbols consisting of birds, animals, reptiles, human beings, and composite forms. According to one reading of the Table, this border represents the four elements; the creatures are elemental beings. According to another interpretation, the border represents the archetypal spheres, and in its frieze of composite figures are the patterns of those forms which in various combinations will subsequently manifest themselves in the material world. The four flowers at the corners of the Table are those which, because their blossoms always face the sun and follow its course across the sky, are sacred emblems of that finer part of man's nature which delights in facing its Creator.

According to the secret doctrine of the Chaldeans, the universe is divided into four states of being (planes or spheres): archetypal, intellectual, sidereal, and elemental. Each of these reveals the others; the superior controlling the inferior, and the inferior receiving influence from the superior. The archetypal plane was considered synonymous with the intellect of the Triune Divinity. Within this divine, incorporeal, and eternal sphere are included all the lower manifestations of life--all that is, has been, or ever shall be. Within the Kosmic Intellect all things spiritual or material exist as archetypes, or divine thought-forms, which is shown in the Table by a chain of secret similes.

In the middle region of the Table appears the all-form-containing personified Spiritual Essence--the source and substance of all things. From this proceed the lower worlds as nine emanations in groups of three (the Ophionic, Ibimorphous, and Nephtæan Triads). Consider in this connection the analogy of the Qabbalistic Sephiroth, or the nine spheres issuing from Kether, the Crown. The twelve Governors of the Universe (the Mendesian, Ammonian, Momphtæan, and Omphthæan Triads)--vehicles for the distribution of the creative influences, and shown in the upper region of the Table--are directed in their activities by the Divine Mind patterns existing in the archetypal sphere. The archetypes are abstract patterns formulated in the Divine Mind and by them all the inferior activities are controlled.

In the lower region of the Table are the Father Fountains (the Horæan, Pandochæan, Thaustic, and Æluristic Triads), keepers of the great gates

of the universe. These distribute to the lower worlds the influences descending from the Governors shown above.

In the theology of the Egyptians, goodness takes precedence and all things partake of its nature to a higher or lower degree. Goodness is sought by all. It is the Prime Cause of causes. Goodness is self-diffused and hence exists in all things, for nothing can produce that which it does not have in itself. The Table demonstrates that all is in God and God is in all; that all is in all and each is in each. In the intellectual world are invisible spiritual counterparts of the creatures which inhabit the elemental world. Therefore, the lowest exhibits the highest, the corporeal declares the intellectual, and the invisible i., made manifest by its works. For this reason the Egyptians made images of substances existing in the inferior sensible world to serve as visible exemplars of superior and invisible powers. To the corruptible images they assigned the virtues of the incorruptible divinities, thus demonstrating arcanelly that this world is but the shadow of God, the outward picture of the paradise within. All that is in the invisible archetypal sphere is revealed in the sensible corporeal world by the light of Nature.

The Archetypal and Creative Mind--first through its Paternal Foundation and afterwards through secondary Gods called Intelligences--poured out the whole infinity of its powers by continuous exchange from highest to lowest. In their phallic symbolism the Egyptians used the sperm to represent the spiritual spheres, because each contains all that comes forth from it. The Chaldeans and Egyptians also held that everything which is a result dwells in the cause of itself and turns to that cause as the lotus to the sun. Accordingly, the Supreme Intellect, through its Paternal Foundation, first created light--the angelic world. Out of that light were then created the invisible hierarchies of beings which some call the stars; and out of the stars the four elements and the sensible world were formed. Thus all are in all, after their respective kinds. All visible bodies or elements are in the invisible stars or spiritual elements, and the stars are likewise in those bodies; the stars are in the angels and the angels in the stars; the angels are in God and God is in all. Therefore, all are divinely in the Divine, angelically in the angels, and corporeally in the corporeal world, and vice versa. just as the seed is the tree folded up, so the world is God unfolded.

Proclus says: "Every property of divinity permeates all creation and gives itself to all inferior creatures. "One of the manifestations of the Supreme Mind is the power of reproduction according to species which

it confers upon every creature of which it is the divine part. Thus souls, heavens, elements, animals, plants, and stones generate themselves each according to its pattern, but all are dependent upon the one fertilizing principle existing in the Supreme Mind. The fecundative power, though of itself a unit, manifests differently through the various substances, for in the mineral it contributes to material existence, in the plant it manifests as vitality, and in the animal as sensibility. It imparts motion to the heavenly bodies, thought to the souls of men, intellectuality to the angels, and superessentiality to God. Thus it is seen that all forms are of one substance and all life of one force, and these are co-existent in the nature of the Supreme One.

This doctrine was first expounded by Plato. His disciple, Aristotle, set it forth in these words: "We say that this Sensible World is an image of another; therefore since this world is vivid or alive, how much more, then, that other must live. \* \* \* Yonder, therefore, above the stellar virtues, stand other heavens to be attained, like the heavens of this world; beyond them, because they are of a higher kind, brighter and vaster; nor are they distant from each Other like this one, for they are incorporeal. Yonder, too, exists an earth, not of inanimate matter, but vivid with animal life and all natural terrestrial phenomena like this one, but of other kinds and perfections. There are plants, also, and gardens, and flowing water; there are aquatic animals but of nobler species. Yonder is air and life appropriate to it, all immortal. And although the life there is analogous to ours, yet it is nobler, seeing that it is intellectual, perpetual and unalterable. For if anyone should object and ask, How in the world above do the plants, etc. above mentioned find footing, we should answer that they do not have objective existence, for they were produced by the primal Author in an absolute condition and without exteriorization. They are, therefore, in the same case as intellect and soul; they suffer no defect such as waste and corruption, since the beings yonder are full of energy, strength and joy, as living in a life sublime and being the issue of one fount and of one quality, compounded of all like sweet savors, delicate perfumes, harmonious color and sound, and other perfections. Nor do they move violently about nor intermix nor corrupt each other, but each perfectly preserves its own essential character; and they are simple and do not multiply as corporeal beings do."

In the midst of the Table is a great covered throne with a seated female figure representing Isis, but here called the Pantomorphic IYNX. G. R. S. Mead defines the IYNX as "a transmitting intelligence." Others have declared it to be a symbol of Universal Being. Over the head of the

goddess the throne is surmounted by a triple crown, and beneath her feet is the house of material substance. The threefold crown is here symbolic of the Triune Divinity, called by the Egyptians the Supreme Mind, and described in the *Sepher ha Zohar* as being "hidden and unrevealed." According to the Hebrew system of Qabbalism, the Tree of the Sephiroth was divided into two parts, the upper invisible and the lower visible. The upper consisted of three parts and the lower of seven. The three uncognizable Sephiroth were called *Kether*, the Crown; *Chochmah*, Wisdom; and *Binah*, Understanding. These are too abstract to permit of comprehension, whereas the lower seven spheres that came forth from them were within the grasp of human consciousness. The central panel contains seven triads of figures. These represent the lower Sephiroth, all emanating from the concealed threefold crown over the throne.

Kircher writes: "The throne denotes the diffusion of the triform Supreme Mind along the universal paths of the three worlds. Out of these three intangible spheres emerges the sensible universe, which Plutarch calls the 'House of Horns' and the Egyptians, the 'Great Gate of the Gods.' The top of the throne is in the midst of diffused serpent-shaped flames, indicating that the Supreme Mind is filled with light and life, eternal and incorruptible, removed from all material contact. How the Supreme Mind communicated His fire to all creatures is clearly set forth in the symbolism of the Table. The Divine Fire is communicated to lower spheres through the universal power of Nature personified by the World Virgin, Isis, here denominated the IYNX, or the polymorphous all-containing Universal Idea." The word Idea is here used in its Platonic sense. "Plato believed that there are eternal forms of all possible things which exist without matter; and to these eternal and immaterial forms he gave the name of *ideas*. In the Platonic sense, *ideas* were the patterns according to which the Deity fashioned the phenomenal or ectypal world." (Sir W. Hamilton.)

Kircher describes the 21 figures in the central panel thus: "Seven principal triads, corresponding to seven superior worlds, are shown in the central section of the Table. They all originate from the fiery, invisible archetype [the triple crown of the throne]. The first, the Ophionic or IYNX Triad, V S W, corresponds to the vital and fiery world and is the first intellectual world, called by the ancients the *Aetherium*. Zoroaster says of it: 'Oh, what rigorous rulers this world has!' The second, or Ibimorphous Triad, O Q R, corresponds to the second intellectual, or ethereal, world, and is concerned with the principle of humidity. The third, or Nephtæan Triad, X Y Z, corresponds to the third

intellectual and ethereal [world] and is concerned with fecundity. These are the three triads of the ethereal worlds, which correspond to the Father Foundation. Then follow the four triads of the sensible, or material, worlds, of which the first two correspond to the sidereal worlds, G I K and  $\gamma \delta \epsilon$ , namely, Osiris and Isis, Sun and Moon, indicated by two bulls. They are followed by two triads--the Hecatine, LM N, and the Serapæan,  $\zeta \eta \theta$ , corresponding to the sublunary and subterranean worlds. These complete the seven worlds of primary Genii ruling the natural universe. Psellus quotes Zoroaster: 'The Egyptians and the Chaldeans, taught that there were seven corporeal worlds (i. e., worlds ruled by the intellectual powers); the first is of pure fire; the second, third, and fourth, ethereal; the fifth, sixth, and seventh, material; the seventh being the one called terrestrial and hater of light, and is located under the Moon, comprising

WESTCOTT'S KEY TO THE BEMBINE TABLE.

From Westcott's *The Isiac Tablet*.

Zoroaster declared that the number three shines throughout the world. This is revealed in the Bembine, Table by a series of triads representing the creative impulses. Of the Isiac Table Alexandre Lenoir writes: "The Isiac Table, as a work of art, is not of great interest. it is but a composition, rather cold and insignificant, whose figures, summarily sketched and methodically placed near each other, give but little impression of life. But, if on the contrary after examining it, we understand the purpose of the author, we become soon convinced that the Isiac Table is an image of the heavenly sphere divided in small parts to be used very like, for general teaching. According to that idea, we can conclude that the Isiac Table was originally the introduction to a collection followed by the Mysteries of Isis. It was engraved on copper in order to be used in the ceremonial of initiation." (See *New Essay on the Isiac Table*.)

within itself the matter called *fundus*, or foundation. 'These seven, plus the one invisible crown, constitute the eight worlds. \* \* \*

"Plato writes that it is needful for the philosopher to know how the seven circles beneath the first one are arranged according to the Egyptians. The first triad of fire denotes life; the second, water, over which rule the Ibimorphous divinities; and the third, air, ruled by Nephta. From the fire the heavens were created, from

the water the earth, and air was the mediator between them. In the Sephira Yetzirah it is said that from the three originate the seven, i. e., the height, the depth, the East, the West, the North, and the South, and the Holy Temple in the center sustaining them all. Is not the Holy Temple in the center the great throne of the many-formed Spirit of Nature which is shown in the middle of the Tablet? What are the seven triads but the seven Powers that rule over the world? Psellus writes: "The Egyptians worshipped the triad of faith, truth, and love; and the seven fountains: the Sun as ruler--the fountain of matter; then the fountain of the archangels; the fountain of the senses; of judgment; of lightning; of reflections; and of characters of unknown composition. They say that the highest material fountains are those of Apollo, Osiris, and Mercury--the fountains of the centers of the elements. "Thus, they understood by the Sun as ruler the solar world; by the material archangelic, the lunar world; by the fountain of the senses, the world of Saturn; by judgment, Jupiter; by lightning, Mars; by that of the reflections, or mirrors, the world of Venus; by the fountain of characters, the world of Mercury. All these are shown by the figures in the center pane of the Tablet."

The upper panel contains the twelve figures of the zodiac arranged in four triads. The center figure in each group represents one of the four fixed signs of the zodiac. *S* is the sign of Aquarius; *Z*, Taurus; *C*, Leo; and *G*, Scorpio. These are called the *Fathers*. In the secret teachings of the Far East these four figures--the man, the bull, the lion, and the eagle--are called the winged globes or the four Maharajahs who stand upon the corners of creation. The four cardinal signs--*P*, Capricorn; *X*, Aries; *B*, Cancer; *F*, Libra--are called the Powers. The four common signs--*V*, Pisces; *A*, Gemini; *E*, Virgo; *H*, Sagittarius--are called the *Minds* of the Four Lords. This explains the meaning of the winged globes of Egypt, for the four central figures--Aquarius, Taurus, Leo, and Scorpio (called by Ezekiel the *Cherubim*)--are the globes; the cardinal and common signs on either side are the wings. Therefore the twelve signs of the zodiac may be symbolized by four globes, each with two wings.

The celestial triads are further shown by the Egyptians as a globe (the *Father*) from which issue a serpent (the *Mind*) and wings (the *Power*). These twelve forces are the fabricators of the world, and from them emanate the microcosm, or the mystery of the twelve sacred animals--representing in the universe the twelve parts of the world and in man the twelve parts of the human body. Anatomically, the twelve figures in the upper panel may well symbolize the twelve convolutions of the brain and the twelve figures in the lower panel the twelve zodiacal members and organs of the human body, for man is a creature formed of the twelve sacred animals with his members and organs under the direct control of the twelve governors or powers resident in the brain.

A more profound interpretation is found in the correspondences between the twelve figures in the upper panel and the twelve in the lower. This furnishes a key to one of the most arcane of ancient secrets--the relationship existing between the two great zodiacs the *fixed* and the *movable*. The *fixed* zodiac is described as an immense dodecahedron, its twelve surfaces representing the outermost walls of abstract space. From each surface of this dodecahedron a



great spiritual power, radiating inward, becomes embodied as one of the hierarchies of the movable zodiac, which is a band of circumambulating so-called fixed stars. Within this *movable* zodiac are posited the various planetary and elemental bodies. The relation of these two zodiacs to the subzodiacal spheres has a correlation in the respiratory system of the human body. The great *fixed* zodiac may be said to represent the atmosphere, the *movable* zodiac the lungs, and the subzodiacal worlds the body. The spiritual atmosphere containing the vivifying energies of the twelve divine powers of the great *fixed* zodiac is inhaled by the cosmic lungs--the *movable* zodiac--and distributed by them through the constitution of the twelve holy animals which are the parts and members of the material universe. The functional cycle is completed when the poisonous effluvia of the lower worlds collected by the *movable* zodiac are exhaled into the great *fixed* zodiac, there to be purified by being passed through the divine natures of its twelve eternal hierarchies.

The Table as a whole is susceptible of many interpretations. If the border of the Table with its hieroglyphic figures be accepted as the spiritual source, then the throne in the center represents the physical body within which human nature is enthroned. From this point of view the entire Table becomes emblematic of the auric bodies of man, with the border as the outer extremity or shell of the *auric egg*. If the throne be accepted as the symbol of the spiritual sphere, the border typifies the elements, and the various panels surrounding the central one become emblematic of the worlds or planes emanating from the one divine source. If the Table be considered from a purely physical basis, the throne becomes symbolic of the generative system and the Table reveals the secret processes of embryology as applied to the formation of the material worlds. If a purely physiological and anatomical interpretation be desired, the central throne becomes the heart, the Ibimorphous Triad the mind, the Nephtæan Triad the generative system, and the surrounding hieroglyphics the various parts and members of the human body. From the evolutionary viewpoint the central gate becomes the point of both entrance and exit. Here also is set forth the process of initiation, in which the candidate after passing successfully through the various ordeals is finally brought into the presence of his own soul, which he alone is capable of unveiling.

If cosmogony be the subject of consideration, the central panel represents the spiritual worlds, the upper panel the intellectual worlds, and the lower panel the material worlds. The central panel may also symbolize the nine invisible worlds, and the creature marked *T* the physical nature--the footstool of Isis, the Spirit of Universal Life. Considered in the light of alchemy, the central panel contains the metals and the borders the alchemical processes. The figure seated on the throne is the Universal Mercury--the "stone of the wise"; the flaming canopy of the throne above is the Divine Sulphur; and the cube of earth beneath is the elemental salt.

The three triads--or the *Paternal Foundation*--in the central panel represent the Silent Watchers, the three invisible parts of the nature of man; the two panels on either side are the quaternary lower nature of man. In the central panel are 21

figures. This number is sacred to the sun—which consists of three great powers, each with seven attributes—and by Qabbalistic reduction 21 becomes 3, or the Great Triad.

It will yet be proved that the Table of Isis is directly connected with Egyptian Gnosticism, for in a Gnostic papyrus preserved in the Bodleian Library there is a direct reference to the twelve *Fathers* or *Paternities* beneath whom are twelve Fountains. (See *Egyptian Magic* by S.S.D.D.) That the lower panel represents the underworld is further emphasized by the two gates—the great gate of the East and the great gate of the West—for in the Chaldean theology the sun rises and sets through gates in the underworld, where it wanders during the hours of darkness. As Plato was for thirteen years under the instruction of the Magi Patheneith, Ochoaps, Sechnouphis, and Etymon of Sebbennithis, his philosophy consequently is permeated with the Chaldean and Egyptian system of triads. The Bembine Table is a diagrammatic exposition of the so-called Platonic philosophy, for in its design is epitomized the entire theory of mystic cosmogony and generation. The most valuable guide to the interpretation of this Table is the *Commentaries of Proclus on the Theology of Plato*. The *Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster* also contains many allusions to the theogonic principles which are demonstrated by the Table.

The *Theogony* of Hesiod contains the most complete account of the Greek cosmogony myth. Orphic cosmogony has left its impress upon the various forms of philosophy and religion—Greek, Egyptian, and Syrian—which it contacted. Chief of the Orphic symbols was the *mundane egg* from which Phanes sprang into light. Thomas Taylor considers the Orphic egg to be synonymous with the *mixture from bound and infinity* mentioned by Plato in the *Philebus*. The egg is furthermore the third Intelligible Triad and the proper symbol of the Demiurgus, whose auric body is the egg of the inferior universe.

Eusebius, on the authority of Porphyry, declared that the Egyptians acknowledged one intellectual Author or Creator of the world under the name of *Cneph* and that they worshiped him in a statue of human form and dark blue complexion, holding in his hand a girdle and a scepter, wearing on his head a royal plume, and thrusting forth an egg out of his mouth. (See *An Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology*) While the Bembine Table is rectangular-shaped, it signifies philosophically the Orphic egg of the universe with its contents. In the esoteric doctrines the supreme individual achievement is the breaking of the Orphic egg, which is equivalent to the return of the spirit to the Nirvana—the *absolute* condition—of the Oriental mystics.

*The New Pantheon* by Samuel Boyse contains three plates showing various sections of the Bembine Table. The author, however, makes no important contribution to the knowledge of the subject. In *The Mythology and Fables of the Ancients Explained from History*, the Abbé Banier devotes a chapter to a consideration of the *Mensa Isiaca*. After reviewing the conclusions of Montfaucon, Kircher, and Pignorius, he adds: "I am of the opinion that: it was a votive table,

which some prince or private person had consecrated to Isis, as an acknowledgment for some benefit which he believed she had conferred upon him."

## The Life and Philosophy of Pythagoras

WHILE Mnesarchus, the father of Pythagoras, was in the city of Delphi on matters pertaining to his business as a merchant, he and his wife, Parthenis, decided to consult the oracle of Delphi as to whether the Fates were favorable for their return voyage to Syria. When the Pythoness (prophetess of Apollo) seated herself on the golden tripod over the yawning vent of the oracle, she did not answer the question they had asked, but told Mnesarchus that his wife was then with child and would give birth to a son who was destined to surpass all men in beauty and wisdom, and who throughout the course of his life would contribute much to the benefit of mankind. Mnesarchus was so deeply impressed by the prophecy that he changed his wife's name to Pythasis, in honor of the Pythian priestess. When the child was born at Sidon in Phoenicia, it was--as the oracle had said--a son. Mnesarchus and Pythasis named the child Pythagoras, for they believed that he had been predestined by the oracle.

Many strange legends have been preserved concerning the birth of Pythagoras. Some maintained that he was no mortal man: that he was one of the gods who had taken a human body to enable him to come into the world and instruct the human race. Pythagoras was one of the many sages and saviors of antiquity for whom an immaculate conception is asserted. In his *Anacalypsis*, Godfrey Higgins writes: "The first striking circumstance in which the history of Pythagoras agrees with the history of Jesus is, that they were natives of nearly the same country; the former being born at Sidon, the latter at Bethlehem, both in Syria. The father of Pythagoras, as well as the father of Jesus, was prophetically informed that his wife should bring forth a son, who should be a benefactor to mankind. They were both born when their mothers were from home on journeys, Joseph and his wife having gone up to Bethlehem to be taxed, and the father of Pythagoras having travelled from Samos, his residence, to Sidon, about his mercantile concerns. Pythais [Pythasis], the mother of Pythagoras, had a connexion with an Apolloniad spectre, or ghost, of the God Apollo, or God Sol, (of course this must have been a *holy* ghost, and here we have the Holy Ghost) which afterward appeared to her husband, and told him that he must have no connexion with his wife during her pregnancy--a story

evidently the same as that relating to Joseph and Mary. From these peculiar circumstances, Pythagoras was known by the same title as Jesus, namely, the *son of God*; and was supposed by the multitude to be under the influence of Divine inspiration."

This most famous philosopher was born sometime between 600 and 590 B.C., and the length of his life has been estimated at nearly one hundred years.

The teachings of Pythagoras indicate that he was thoroughly conversant with the precepts of Oriental and Occidental esotericism. He traveled among the Jews and was instructed by the Rabbins concerning the secret traditions of Moses, the lawgiver of Israel. Later the School of the Essenes was conducted chiefly for the purpose of interpreting the Pythagorean symbols. Pythagoras was initiated into the Egyptian, Babylonian, and Chaldean Mysteries. Although it is believed by some that he was a disciple of Zoroaster, it is doubtful whether his instructor of that name was the God-man now revered by the Parsees. While accounts of his travels differ, historians agree that he visited many countries and studied at the feet of many masters.

"After having acquired all which it was possible for him to learn of the Greek philosophers and, presumably, become an initiate in the Eleusinian mysteries, he went to Egypt, and after many rebuffs and refusals, finally succeeded in securing initiation in the Mysteries of Isis, at the hands of the priests of Thebes. Then this intrepid 'joiner' wended his way into Phoenicia and Syria where the Mysteries of Adonis were conferred upon him, and crossing to the valley of the Euphrates he tarried long enough to become versed in, the secret lore of the Chaldeans, who still dwelt in the vicinity of Babylon. Finally, he made his greatest and most historic venture through Media and Persia into Hindustan where he remained several years as a pupil and initiate of the learned Brahmins of Elephanta and Ellora." (See *Ancient Freemasonry*, by Frank C. Higgins, 32°.) The same author adds that the name of Pythagoras is still preserved in the records of the Brahmins as *Yavancharya*, the Ionian Teacher.

Pythagoras was said to have been the first man to call himself a *philosopher*; in fact, the world is indebted to him for the word *philosopher*. Before that time the wise men had called themselves *sages*, which was interpreted to mean *those who know*. Pythagoras was more modest. He

coined the word *philosopher*, which he defined as *one who is attempting to find out*.

After returning from his wanderings, Pythagoras established a school, or as it has been sometimes called, a university, at Crotona, a Dorian colony in Southern Italy. Upon his arrival at Crotona he was regarded askance, but after a short time those holding important positions in the surrounding colonies sought his counsel in matters of great moment. He gathered around him a small group of sincere disciples whom he instructed in the secret wisdom which had been revealed to him, and also in the fundamentals of occult mathematics, music, and astronomy, which he considered to be the triangular foundation of all the arts and sciences.

When he was about sixty years old, Pythagoras married one of his disciples, and seven children resulted from the union. His wife was a remarkably able woman, who not only inspired him during the years of his life but after his assassination continued to promulgate his doctrines.

As is so often the case with genius, Pythagoras by his outspokenness incurred both political and personal enmity. Among those who came for initiation was one who, because Pythagoras refused to admit him, determined to destroy both the man and his philosophy. By means of false propaganda, this disgruntled one turned the minds of the common people against the philosopher. Without warning, a band of murderers descended upon the little group of buildings where the great teacher and his disciples dwelt, burned the structures and killed Pythagoras.

Accounts of the philosopher's death do not agree. Some say that he was murdered with his disciples; others that, on escaping from Crotona with a small band of followers, he was trapped and burned alive by his enemies in a little house where the band had decided to rest for the night. Another account states that, finding themselves trapped in the burning structure, the disciples threw themselves into the flames, making of their own bodies a bridge over which Pythagoras escaped, only to die of a broken heart a short time afterwards as the result of grieving over the apparent fruitlessness of his efforts to serve and illuminate mankind.

His surviving disciples attempted to perpetuate his doctrines, but they were persecuted on every hand and very little remains today as a testimonial to the greatness of this philosopher. It is said that the

disciples of Pythagoras never addressed him or referred to him by his own name, but always as *The Master* or *That Man*. *This may have been because of the fact that the name Pythagoras was believed to consist of a certain number of specially arranged letters with great sacred significance.* The Word magazine has printed an article by T. R. Prater, showing that Pythagoras initiated his candidates by means of a certain formula concealed within



PYTHAGORAS, THE FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

From *Historia Deorum Fatidicorum*.

During his youth, Pythagoras was a disciple of Pherecydes and Hermodamas, and while in his teens became renowned for the clarity of his philosophic concepts. In height he exceeded six feet; his body was as perfectly formed as that of Apollo. Pythagoras was the personification of majesty and power, and in his presence a felt humble and afraid. As he grew older, his physical power increased rather than waned, so that as he approached the century mark he was actually in the prime of life. The influence of this great soul over those about him was such that a word of praise from Pythagoras filled his disciples with ecstasy, while one committed suicide because the Master became momentarily irritated over something he had done. Pythagoras was so impressed by this tragedy that he never again spoke unkindly to or about anyone.

the letters of his own name. This may explain why the word Pythagoras was so highly revered.

After the death of Pythagoras his school gradually disintegrated, but those who had benefited by its teachings revered the memory of the great philosopher, as during his life they had revered the man himself. As time went on, Pythagoras came to be regarded as a god rather than a man, and his scattered disciples were bound together by their common admiration for the transcendent genius of their teacher. Edouard Schure, in his *Pythagoras and the Delphic Mysteries*, relates the

following incident as illustrative of the bond of fellowship uniting the members of the Pythagorean School:

"One of them who had fallen upon sickness and poverty was kindly taken in by an innkeeper. Before dying he traced a few mysterious signs (the pentagram, no doubt) on the door of the inn and said to the host, 'Do not be uneasy, one of my brothers will pay my debts.' A year afterwards, as a stranger was passing by this inn he saw the signs and said to the host, 'I am a Pythagorean; one of my brothers died here; tell me what I owe you on his account.'"

Frank C. Higgins, 32°, gives an excellent compendium of the Pythagorean tenets in the following outline:

"Pythagoras' teachings are of the most transcendental importance to Masons, inasmuch as they are the necessary fruit of his contact with the leading philosophers of the whole civilized world of his own day, and must represent that in which all were agreed, shorn of all weeds of controversy. Thus, the determined stand made by Pythagoras, in defense of pure monotheism, is sufficient evidence that the tradition to the effect that the unity of God was the supreme secret of all the ancient initiations is substantially correct. The philosophical school of Pythagoras was, in a measure, also a series of initiations, for he caused his pupils to pass through a series of degrees and never permitted them personal contact with himself until they had reached the higher grades. According to his biographers, his degrees were three in number. The first, that of 'Mathematicus,' assuring his pupils proficiency in mathematics and geometry, which was then, as it would be now if Masonry were properly inculcated, the basis upon which all other knowledge was erected. Secondly, the degree of 'Theoreticus,' which dealt with superficial applications of the exact sciences, and, lastly, the degree of 'Electus,' which entitled the candidate to pass forward into the light of the fullest illumination which he was capable of absorbing. The pupils of the Pythagorean school were divided into 'exoterici,' or pupils in the outer grades, and 'esoterici,' after they had passed the third degree of initiation and were entitled to the secret wisdom. Silence, secrecy and unconditional obedience were cardinal principles of this great order." (See *Ancient Freemasonry*.)

## PYTHAGORIC FUNDAMENTALS

The study of geometry, music, and astronomy was considered essential to a rational understanding of God, man, or Nature, and no one could accompany Pythagoras as a disciple who was not thoroughly familiar with these sciences. Many came seeking admission to his school. Each applicant was tested on these three subjects, and if found ignorant, was summarily dismissed.

Pythagoras was not an extremist. He taught moderation in all things rather than excess in anything, for he believed that an excess of virtue was in itself a vice. One of his favorite statements was: "We must avoid with our utmost endeavor, and amputate with fire and sword, and by all other means, from the body, sickness; from the soul, ignorance; from the belly, luxury; from a city, sedition; from a family, discord; and from all things, excess." Pythagoras also believed that there was no crime equal to that of anarchy.

All men know what they *want*, but few know what they *need*. Pythagoras warned his disciples that when they prayed they should not pray for themselves; that when they asked things of the gods they should not ask things for themselves, because no man knows what is good for him and it is for this reason undesirable to ask for things which, if obtained, would only prove to be injurious.

The God of Pythagoras was the *Monad*, or the One that is Everything. He described God as the Supreme Mind distributed throughout all parts of the universe--the Cause of all things, the Intelligence of all things, and the Power within all things. He further declared the motion of God to be circular, the body of God to be composed of the substance of light, and the nature of God to be composed of the substance of truth.

Pythagoras declared that the eating of meat clouded the reasoning faculties. While he did not condemn its use or totally abstain therefrom himself, he declared that judges should refrain from eating meat before a trial, in order that those who appeared before them might receive the most honest and astute decisions. When Pythagoras decided (as he often did) to retire into the temple of God for an extended period of time to meditate and pray, he took with his supply of specially prepared food and drink. The food consisted of equal parts of the seeds of poppy and sesame, the skin of the sea onion from which the juice had been thoroughly extracted, the flower of daffodil, the leaves of mallows, and a paste of barley and peas. These he compounded together with the addition of wild honey. For a beverage he took the seeds of cucumbers,



dried raisins (with seeds removed), the flowers of coriander, the seeds of mallows and purslane, scraped cheese, meal, and cream, mixed together and sweetened with wild honey. Pythagoras claimed that this was the diet of Hercules while wandering in the Libyan desert and was according to the formula given to that hero by the goddess Ceres herself.

The favorite method of healing among the Pythagoreans was by the aid of poultices. These people also knew the magic properties of vast numbers of plants. Pythagoras highly esteemed the medicinal properties of the sea onion, and he is said to have written an entire volume on the subject. Such a work, however, is not known at the present time. Pythagoras discovered that music had great therapeutic power and he prepared special harmonies for various diseases. He apparently experimented also with color, attaining considerable success. One of his unique curative processes resulted from his discovery of the healing value of certain verses from the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* of Homer. These he caused to be read to persons suffering from certain ailments. He was opposed to surgery in all its forms and also objected to cauterizing. He would not permit the disfigurement of the human body, for such, in his estimation, was a sacrilege against the dwelling place of the gods.

Pythagoras taught that friendship was the truest and nearest perfect of all relationships. He declared that in Nature there was a friendship of all for all; of gods for men; of doctrines one for another; of the soul for the body; of the rational part for the irrational part; of philosophy for its theory; of men for one another; of countrymen for one another; that friendship also existed between strangers, between a man and his wife, his children, and his servants. All bonds without friendship were shackles, and there was no virtue in their maintenance. Pythagoras believed that relationships were essentially mental rather than physical, and that a stranger of sympathetic intellect was closer to him than a blood relation whose viewpoint was at variance with his own. Pythagoras defined knowledge as the fruitage of mental accumulation. He believed that it would be obtained in many ways, but principally through observation. Wisdom was the understanding of the source or cause of all things, and this could be secured only by raising the intellect to a point where it intuitively cognized the invisible manifesting outwardly through the visible, and thus became capable of bringing itself *en rapport* with the spirit of things rather than with their forms. The ultimate source that wisdom could cognize was the *Monad*, the mysterious permanent atom of the Pythagoreans.

Pythagoras taught that both man and the universe were made in the image of God; that both being made in the same image, the understanding of one predicated the knowledge of the other. He further taught that there was a constant interplay between the Grand Man (the universe) and man (the little universe).

Pythagoras believed that all the sidereal bodies were alive and that the forms of the planets and stars were merely bodies encasing souls, minds, and spirits in the same manner that the visible human form is but the encasing vehicle for an invisible spiritual organism which is, in reality, the conscious individual. Pythagoras regarded the planets as magnificent deities, worthy of the adoration and respect of man. All these deities, however, he considered subservient to the One First Cause within whom they all existed temporarily, as mortality exists in the midst of immortality.

The famous Pythagorean Y signified the power of choice and was used in the Mysteries as emblematic of the Forking of the Ways. The central stem separated into two parts, one branching to the right and the other to the left. The branch to the right was called *Divine Wisdom* and the one to the left *Earthly Wisdom*. Youth, personified by the candidate, walking the Path of Life, symbolized by the central stem of the Y, reaches the point where the Path divides. The neophyte must then choose whether he will take the left-hand path and, following the dictates of his lower nature, enter upon a span of folly and thoughtlessness which will inevitably result in his undoing, or whether he will take the right-hand road and through integrity, industry, and sincerity ultimately regain union with the immortals in the superior spheres.



THE SYMMETRICAL GEOMETRIC SOLIDS.

To the five symmetrical solids of the ancients is added the sphere (1), the most perfect of all created forms. The five Pythagorean solids are: the tetrahedron (2) with four equilateral triangles as faces; the cube (3) with six squares as faces; the octahedron (4) with eight equilateral triangles as faces; the icosahedron (5) with twenty equilateral triangles as faces; and the dodecahedron (6) with twelve regular pentagons as faces.

It is probable that Pythagoras obtained his concept of the Y from the Egyptians, who included in certain of their initiatory rituals a scene in which the candidate was confronted by two female figures. One of them, veiled with the white robes of the temple, urged the neophyte to enter into the halls of learning; the other, bedecked with jewels, symbolizing earthly treasures, and bearing in her hands a tray loaded with grapes (emblematic of false light), sought to lure him into the chambers of dissipation. This symbol is still preserved among the Tarot cards, where it is called The Forking of the Ways. The forked stick has been the symbol of life among many nations, and it was placed in the desert to indicate the presence of water.

Concerning the theory of transmigration as disseminated by Pythagoras, there are differences of opinion. According to one view, he taught that mortals who during their earthly existence had by their actions become like certain animals, returned to earth again in the form of the beasts which they had grown to resemble. Thus, a timid person would return in the form of a rabbit or a deer; a cruel person in the form of a wolf or other ferocious animal; and a cunning person in the guise of a fox. This concept, however, does not fit into the general Pythagorean scheme, and it is far more likely that it was given in an allegorical rather than a literal sense. It was intended to convey the idea that human beings become bestial when they allow themselves to be dominated by their own lower desires and destructive tendencies. It is probable that the term *transmigration* is to be understood as what is more commonly called *reincarnation*, a doctrine which Pythagoras must have contacted directly or indirectly in India and Egypt.

The fact that Pythagoras accepted the theory of successive reappearances of the spiritual nature in human form is found in a footnote to Levi's *History of Magic*: "He was an important champion of what used to be called the doctrine of metempsychosis, understood as the soul's transmigration into successive bodies. He himself had been (a) Aethalides, a son of Mercury; (b) Euphorbus, son of Panthus, who perished at the hands of Menelaus in the Trojan war; (c) Hermotimus, a

prophet of Clazomenae, a city of Ionia; (d) a humble fisherman; and finally (e) the philosopher of Samos."

Pythagoras also taught that each species of creatures had what he termed a seal, given to it by God, and that the physical form of each was the impression of this seal upon the wax of physical substance. Thus each body was stamped with the dignity of its divinely given pattern. Pythagoras believed that ultimately man would reach a state where he would cast off his gross nature and function in a body of spiritualized ether which would be in juxtaposition to his physical form at all times and which might be the eighth sphere, or Antichthon. From this he would ascend into the realm of the immortals, where by divine birthright he belonged.

Pythagoras taught that everything in nature was divisible into three parts and that no one could become truly wise who did not view every problem as being diagrammatically triangular. He said, "Establish the triangle and the problem is two-thirds solved"; further, "All things consist of three." In conformity with this viewpoint, Pythagoras divided the universe into three parts, which he called the *Supreme World*, the *Superior World*, and the *Inferior World*. The highest, or Supreme World, was a subtle, interpenetrative spiritual essence pervading all things and therefore the true plane of the Supreme Deity itself, the Deity being in every sense omnipresent, omniactive, omnipotent, and omniscient. Both of the lower worlds existed within the nature of this supreme sphere.

The Superior World was the home of the immortals. It was also the dwelling place of the archetypes, or the seals; their natures in no manner partook of the material of earthiness, but they, casting their shadows upon the deep (the Inferior World), were cognizable only through their shadows. The third, or Inferior World, was the home of those creatures who partook of material substance or were engaged in labor with or upon material substance. Hence, this sphere was the home of the mortal gods, the Demiurgi, the angels who labor with men; also the dæmons who partake of the nature of the earth; and finally mankind and the lower kingdoms, those temporarily of the earth but capable of rising above that sphere by reason and philosophy.

The digits 1 and 2 are not considered numbers by the Pythagoreans, because they typify the two supermundane spheres. The Pythagorean numbers, therefore, begin with 3, the triangle, and 4, the square. These added to the 1 and the 2, produce the 10, the great number of all things,

the archetype of the universe. The three worlds were called *receptacles*. The first was the receptacle of principles, the second was the receptacle of intelligences, and the third, or lowest, was the receptacle of quantities.

"The symmetrical solids were regarded by Pythagoras, and by the Greek thinkers after him, as of the greatest importance. To be perfectly symmetrical or regular, a solid must have an equal number of faces meeting at each of its angles, and these faces must be equal regular polygons, i. e., figures whose sides and angles are all equal. Pythagoras, perhaps, may be credited with the great discovery that there are only five such solids.\* \* \*

'Now, the Greeks believed the world [material universe] to be composed of four elements--earth, air, fire, water--and to the Greek mind the conclusion was inevitable that the shapes of the particles of the elements were those of the regular solids. Earth-particles were cubical, the cube being the regular solid possessed of greatest stability; fire-particles were tetrahedral, the tetrahedron being the simplest and, hence, lightest solid. Water-particles were icosahedral for exactly the reverse reason, whilst air-particles, as intermediate between the two latter, were octahedral. The dodecahedron was, to these ancient mathematicians, the most mysterious of the solids; it was by far the most difficult to construct, the accurate drawing of the regular pentagon necessitating a rather elaborate application of Pythagoras' great theorem. Hence the conclusion, as Plato put it, that 'this (the regular dodecahedron) the Deity employed in tracing the plan of the Universe.' (H. Stanley Redgrove, in *Bygone Beliefs*.)

Mr. Redgrove has not mentioned the fifth element of the ancient Mysteries, that which would make the analogy between the symmetrical solids and the elements complete. This fifth element, or ether, was called by the Hindus *akasa*. It was closely correlated with the hypothetical ether of modern science, and was the interpenetrative substance permeating all of the other elements and acting as a common solvent and common denominator of them. The twelve-faced solid also subtly referred to the Twelve Immortals who surfaced the universe, and also to the twelve convolutions of the human brain--the vehicles of those Immortals in the nature of man.

While Pythagoras, in accordance with others of his day, practiced divination (possibly arithmomancy), there is no accurate information

concerning the methods which he used. He is believed to have had a remarkable wheel by means of which he could predict future events, and to have learned hydromancy from the Egyptians. He believed that brass had oracular powers, because even when everything was perfectly still there was always a rumbling sound in brass bowls. He once addressed a prayer to the spirit of a river and out of the water arose a voice, "Pythagoras, I greet thee." It is claimed for him that he was able to cause dæmons to enter into water and disturb its surface, and by means of the agitations certain things were predicted.

After having drunk from a certain spring one day, one of the Masters of Pythagoras announced that the spirit of the water had just predicted that a great earthquake would occur the next day--a prophecy which was fulfilled. It is highly probable that Pythagoras possessed hypnotic power, not only over man but also over animals. He caused a bird to change the course of its flight, a bear to cease its ravages upon a community, and a bull to change its diet, by the exercise of mental influence. He was also gifted with second sight, being able to see things at a distance and accurately describe incidents that had not yet come to pass.

## THE SYMBOLIC APHORISMS OF PYTHAGORAS

Iamblichus gathered thirty-nine of the symbolic sayings of Pythagoras and interpreted them. These have been translated from the Greek by Thomas Taylor. Aphorismic statement was one of the favorite methods of instruction used in the Pythagorean university of Crotona. Ten of the most representative of these aphorisms are reproduced below with a brief elucidation of their concealed meanings.

I. *Declining from the public ways, walk in unfrequented paths.* By this it is to be understood that those who desire wisdom must seek it in solitude.



NUMBER RELATED TO FORM.

Pythagoras taught that the dot symbolized the power of the number 1, the line the power of the number 2, the surface the power of the number 3, and the solid the power of the number 4.

II. *Govern your tongue before all other things, following the gods.* This aphorism warns man that his words, instead of representing him, misrepresent him, and that when in doubt as to what he should say, he should always be silent.

III. *The wind blowing, adore the sound.* Pythagoras here reminds his disciples that the fiat of God is heard in the voice of the elements, and that all things in Nature manifest through harmony, rhythm, order, or procedure the attributes of the Deity.

IV. *Assist a man in raising a burden; but do not assist him in laying it down.* The student is instructed to aid the diligent but never to assist those who seek to evade their responsibilities, for it is a great sin to encourage indolence.

V. *Speak not about Pythagoric concerns without light.* The world is herein warned that it should not attempt to interpret the mysteries of God and the secrets of the sciences without spiritual and intellectual illumination.

VI. *Having departed from your house, turn not back, for the furies will be your attendants.* Pythagoras here warns his followers that any who begin the search for truth and, after having learned part of the mystery, become discouraged and attempt to return again to their former ways of vice and ignorance, will suffer exceedingly; for it is better to know nothing about Divinity than to learn a little and then stop without learning all.

VII. *Nourish a cock, but sacrifice it not; for it is sacred to the sun and moon.* Two great lessons are concealed in this aphorism. The first is a warning against the sacrifice of living things to the gods, because life is sacred and man should not destroy it even as an offering to the Deity. The second warns man that the human body here referred to as a cock is sacred to the sun (God) and the moon (Nature), and should be guarded and preserved as man's most precious medium of expression. Pythagoras also warned his disciples against suicide.

VIII. *Receive not a swallow into your house.* This warns the seeker after truth not to allow drifting thoughts to come into his mind nor shiftless

persons to enter into his life. He must ever surround himself with rationally inspired thinkers and with conscientious workers.

IX. *Offer not your right hand easily to anyone.* This warns the disciple to keep his own counsel and not offer wisdom and knowledge (his right hand) to such as are incapable of appreciating them. The hand here represents Truth, which raises those who have fallen because of ignorance; but as many of the unregenerate do not desire wisdom they will cut off the hand that is extended in kindness to them. Time alone can effect the redemption of the ignorant masses

X. *When rising from the bedclothes, roll them together, and obliterate the impression of the body.* Pythagoras directed his disciples who had awakened from the sleep of ignorance into the waking state of intelligence to eliminate from their recollection all memory of their former spiritual darkness; for a wise man in passing leaves no form behind him which others less intelligent, seeing, shall use as a mold for the casting of idols.

The most famous of the Pythagorean fragments are the *Golden Verses*, ascribed to Pythagoras himself, but concerning whose authorship there is an element of doubt. The *Golden Verses* contain a brief summary of the entire system of philosophy forming the basis of the educational doctrines of Crotona, or, as it is more commonly known, the Italic School. These verses open by counseling the reader to love God, venerate the great heroes, and respect the dæmons and elemental inhabitants. They then urge man to think carefully and industriously concerning his daily life, and to prefer the treasures of the mind and soul to accumulations of earthly goods. The verses also promise man that if he will rise above his lower material nature and cultivate self-control, he will ultimately be acceptable in the sight of the gods, be reunited with them, and partake of their immortality. (It is rather significant to note that Plato paid a great price for some of the manuscripts of Pythagoras which had been saved from the destruction of Crotona. See *Historia Deorum Fatidicorum*, Geneva, 1675.)

## PYTHAGOREAN ASTRONOMY

According to Pythagoras, the position of each body in the universe was determined by the essential dignity of that body. The popular concept of his day was that the earth occupied the center of the solar system; that the planets, including the sun and moon, moved about the earth;



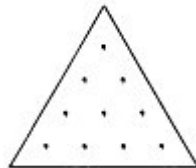
and that the earth itself was flat and square. Contrary to this concept, and regardless of criticism, Pythagoras declared that fire was the most important of all the elements; that the center was the most important part of every body; and that, just as Vesta's fire was in the midst of every home, so in the midst of the universe was a flaming sphere of celestial radiance. This central globe he called the *Tower of Jupiter*, the *Globe of Unity*, the *Grand Monad*, and the *Altar of Vesta*. As the sacred number 10 symbolized the sum of all parts and the completeness of all things, it was only natural for Pythagoras to divide the universe into ten spheres, symbolized by ten concentric circles. These circles began at the center with the globe of Divine Fire; then came the seven planers, the earth, and another mysterious planet, called *Antichthon*, which was never visible.

Opinions differ as to the nature of *Antichthon*. Clement of Alexandria believed that it represented the mass of the heavens; others held the opinion that it was the moon. More probably it was the mysterious eighth sphere of the ancients, the dark planet which moved in the same orbit as the earth but which was always concealed from the earth by the body of the sun, being in exact opposition to the earth at all times. Is this the mysterious Lilith concerning which astrologers have speculated so long?

Isaac Myer has stated: "The Pythagoreans held that each star was a world having its own atmosphere, with an immense extent surrounding it, of aether." (See *The Qabbalah*.) The disciples of Pythagoras also highly revered the planet Venus, because it was the only planet bright enough to cast a shadow. As the morning star, Venus is visible before sunrise, and as the evening star it shines forth immediately after sunset. Because of these qualities, a number of names have been given to it by the ancients. Being visible in the sky at sunset, it was called *vesper*, and as it arose before the sun, it was called *the false light*, *the star of the morning*, or *Lucifer*, which means *the light-bearer*. Because of this relation to the sun, the planet was also referred to as Venus, Astarte, Aphrodite, Isis, and The Mother of the Gods. It is possible that: at some seasons of the year in certain latitudes the fact that Venus was a crescent could be detected without the aid of a telescope. This would account for the crescent which is often seen in connection with the goddesses of antiquity, the stories of which do not agree with the phases of the moon. The accurate knowledge which Pythagoras possessed concerning astronomy he undoubtedly secured in the Egyptian temples, for their priests understood the true relationship of the heavenly bodies many thousands of years before that knowledge was revealed to the

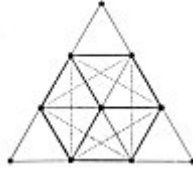
uninitiated world. The fact that the knowledge he acquired in the temples enabled him to make assertions requiring two thousand years to check proves why Plato and Aristotle so highly esteemed the profundity of the ancient Mysteries. In the midst of comparative scientific ignorance, and without the aid of any modern instruments, the priest-philosophers had discovered the true fundamentals of universal dynamics.

An interesting application of the Pythagorean doctrine of geometric solids as expounded by Plato is found in *The Canon*. "Nearly all the old philosophers," says its anonymous author, "devised an harmonic theory with respect to the universe, and the practice continued till the old mode of philosophizing died out. Kepler (1596), in order to demonstrate the Platonic doctrine, that the universe was formed of the five regular solids, proposed the following rule. 'The earth is a circle, the measurer of all. Round it describe a dodecahedron; the circle inclosing this will be Mars. Round Mars describe a tetrahedron; the sphere inclosing this will be Jupiter. Describe a cube round Jupiter; the sphere containing this will be Saturn. Now inscribe in the earth an icosahedron; the circle inscribed in it will be Venus. Inscribe an octahedron in Venus; the circle inscribed in it will be Mercury' (*Mysterium Cosmographicum*, 1596). This rule cannot be taken seriously as a real statement of the proportions of the cosmos, for it bears no real resemblance to the ratios published by Copernicus in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Yet Kepler was very proud of his formula, and said he valued it more than the Electorate of Saxony. It was also approved by those two eminent authorities, Tycho and Galileo, who evidently understood it. Kepler himself never gives the least hint of how his precious rule is to be interpreted." Platonic astronomy was not concerned with the material constitution or arrangement of the heavenly bodies, but considered the stars and planers primarily as focal points of Divine intelligence. Physical astronomy was regarded as the science of "shadows," philosophical astronomy the science of "realities."



THE TETRACTYS.

Theon of Smyrna declares that the ten dots, or tetractys of Pythagoras, was a symbol of the greatest importance, for to the discerning mind it revealed the mystery of universal nature. The Pythagoreans bound themselves by the following oath: "By Him who gave to our soul the tetractys, which hath the fountain and root of ever-springing nature."



THE CUBE AND THE STAR.

By connecting the ten dots of the tetractys, nine triangles are formed. Six of these are involved in the forming of the cube. The same triangles, when lines are properly drawn between them, also reveal the six-pointed star with a dot in the center. Only seven dots are used in forming the cube and the star. Qabbalistically, the three unused corner dots represent the threefold, invisible causal nature of the universe, while the seven dots involved in the cube and the star are the Elohim--the Spirits of the seven creative periods. The Sabbath, or seventh day, is the central dot.

## Pythagorean Mathematics

CONCERNING the secret significance of numbers there has been much speculation. Though many interesting discoveries have been made, it may be safely said that with the death of Pythagoras the great key to this science was lost. For nearly 2500 years philosophers of all nations have attempted to unravel the Pythagorean skein, but apparently none has been successful. Notwithstanding attempts made to obliterate all records of the teachings of Pythagoras, fragments have survived which give clues to some of the simpler parts of his philosophy. The major secrets were never committed to writing, but were communicated orally to a few chosen disciples. These apparently dated not divulge their secrets to the profane, the result being that when death sealed their lips the arcana died with diem.

Certain of the secret schools in the world today are perpetuations of the ancient Mysteries, and although it is quite possible that they may possess some of the original numerical formulæ, there is no evidence of it in the voluminous writings which have issued from these groups during the last five hundred years. These writings, while frequently

discussing Pythagoras, show no indication of a more complete knowledge of his intricate doctrines than the post-Pythagorean Greek speculators had, who talked much, wrote little, knew less, and concealed their ignorance under a series of mysterious hints and promises. Here and there among the literary products of early writers are found enigmatic statements which they made no effort to interpret. The following example is quoted from Plutarch:

"The Pythagoreans indeed go farther than this, and honour even numbers and geometrical diagrams with the names and titles of the gods. Thus they call the equilateral triangle head-born Minerva and Tritogenia, because it may be equally divided by three perpendiculars drawn from each of the angles. So the unit they term Apollo, as to the number two they have affixed the name of strife and audaciousness, and to that of three, justice. For, as doing an injury is an extreme on the one side, and suffering one is an extreme on the other side, and suffering in the middle between them. In like manner the number thirty-six, their Tetractys, or sacred Quaternion, being composed of the first four odd numbers added to the first four even ones, as is commonly reported, is looked upon by them as the most solemn oath they can take, and called Kosmos." (*Isis and Osiris*.)

Earlier in the same work, Plutarch also notes: "For as the power of the triangle is expressive of the nature of Pluto, Bacchus, and Mars; and the properties of the square of Rhea, Venus, Ceres, Vesta, and Juno; of the Dodecahedron of Jupiter; so, as we are informed by Eudoxus, is the figure of fifty-six angles expressive of the nature of Typhon." Plutarch did not pretend to explain the inner significance of the symbols, but believed that the relationship which Pythagoras established between the geometrical solids and the gods was the result of images the great sage had seen in the Egyptian temples.

Albert Pike, the great Masonic symbolist, admitted that there were many points concerning which he could secure no reliable information. In his *Symbolism*, for the 32° and 33°, he wrote: "I do not understand why the 7 should be called Minerva, or the cube, Neptune." Further on he added: "Undoubtedly the names given by the Pythagoreans to the different numbers were themselves enigmatical and symbolic-and there is little doubt that in the time of Plutarch the meanings these names concealed were lost. Pythagoras had succeeded too well in concealing his symbols with a veil that was from the first impenetrable, without his oral explanation \* \* \*."

This uncertainty shared by all true students of the subject proves conclusively that it is unwise to make definite statements founded on the indefinite and fragmentary information available concerning the Pythagorean system of mathematical philosophy. The material which follows represents an effort to collect a few salient points from the scattered records preserved by disciples of Pythagoras and others who have since contacted his philosophy.

## METHOD OF SECURING THE NUMERICAL POWER OF WORDS

The first step in obtaining the numerical value of a word is to resolve it back into its original tongue. Only words of Greek or Hebrew derivation can be successfully analyzed by this method, and *all words must be spelled in their most ancient and complete forms*. Old Testament words and names, therefore, must be translated back into the early Hebrew characters and New Testament words into the Greek. Two examples will help to clarify this principle.

The *Demiurgus* of the Jews is called in English *Jehovah*, but when seeking the numerical value of the name *Jehovah* it is necessary to resolve the name into its Hebrew letters. It becomes יהוה, and is read from right to left. The Hebrew letters are: ה, He; ו, Vau; ה, He; י, Yod; and when reversed into the English order from left to right read: *Yod-He-Vau-He*. By consulting the foregoing table of letter values, it is found that the four characters of this sacred name have the following numerical significance: *Yod* equals 10, *He* equals 5, *Vau* equals 6, and the second *He* equals 5. Therefore,  $10+5+6+5=26$ , a synonym of *Jehovah*. If the English letters were used, the answer obviously would not be correct.

The second example is the mysterious Gnostic pantheos *Abraxas*. For this name the Greek table is used. *Abraxas* in Greek is Ἀβραξας.  $A = 1$ ,  $\beta = 2$ ,  $\rho = 100$ ,  $\alpha = 1$ ,  $\xi = 60$ ,  $\alpha = 1$ ,  $\varsigma = 200$ , the sum being 365, the number of days in the year. This number furnishes the key to the mystery of *Abraxas*, who is symbolic of the 365 Æons, or Spirits of the Days, gathered together in one composite personality. *Abraxas* is symbolic of five creatures, and as the circle of the year actually consists of 360 degrees, each of the emanating deities is one-fifth of this power, or 72, one of the most sacred numbers in the Old Testament of the Jews and in their Qabbalistic system. This same method is used in finding the numerical value of the names of the gods and goddesses of the Greeks and Jews.

All higher Greek numbers can be reduced to one of the original ten numerals, and the 10 itself to 1. Therefore, all groups of numbers resulting from the translation of names of deities into their numerical equivalents have a basis in one of the first ten numbers. By this system, in which the digits are added together, 666 becomes 6+6+6 or 18, and this, in turn, becomes 1+8 or 9. According to Revelation, 144,000 are to be saved. This number becomes 1+4+4+0+0+0, which equals 9, thus proving that both the Beast of Babylon and the number of the saved refer to man himself, whose symbol is the number 9. This system can be used successfully with both Greek and Hebrew letter values.

The original Pythagorean system of numerical philosophy contains nothing to justify the practice now in vogue of changing the given name or surname in the hope of improving the temperament or financial condition by altering the name vibrations.

There is also a system of calculation in vogue for the English language, but its accuracy is a matter of legitimate dispute. It is comparatively modern and has no relationship either to the Hebrew Qabbalistic system or to the Greek procedure. The claim made by some that it is Pythagorean is not supported by any tangible evidence, and there are many reasons why such a contention is untenable. The fact that Pythagoras used 10 as the basis of calculation, while this system uses 9--an imperfect number--is in itself almost conclusive. Furthermore, the arrangement of the Greek and Hebrew letters does not agree closely enough with the English to permit the application of the number sequences of one language to the number sequences of the others. Further experimentation with

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Alpha	Α	Β	Γ	Δ	Ε	Ζ	Η	Θ	Ι
Beta	Β	Γ	Δ	Ε	Ζ	Η	Θ	Ι	Κ
Gamma	Γ	Δ	Ε	Ζ	Η	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ
Delta	Δ	Ε	Ζ	Η	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ
Eta	Ε	Ζ	Η	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν
Zeta	Ζ	Η	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ξ
Eta	Η	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ξ	Ο
Theta	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π
Iota	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ
Kappa	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ
Lambda	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ
Mu	Μ	Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ
Nu	Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ	Φ
Xi	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ	Φ	Χ
Omicron	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ	Φ	Χ	Ψ
Pi	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ	Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω
Rho	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ	Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω	
Sigma	Σ	Τ	Υ	Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω		
Tau	Τ	Υ	Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω			
Upsilon	Υ	Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω				
Phi	Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω					
Chi	Χ	Ψ	Ω						
Psi	Ψ	Ω							
Omega	Ω								

THE NUMERICAL VALUES OF THE HEBREW, GREEK, AND SAMARITAN ALPHABETS.

## Column

- 1 Names of the Hebrew letters.
- 2 Samaritan Letters.
- 3 Hebrew and Chaldean letters.
- 4 Numerical equivalents of the letters.
- 5 Capital and small Greek letters.
- 6 The letters marked with asterisks are those brought to Greece from Phœnicia by Cadmus.
- 7 Name of the Greek letters.
- 8 Nearest English equivalents to the Hebrew, Greek, and Samaritan Letters.

NOTE. When used at the end of a word, the Hebrew *Tau* has the numerical value 440, *Caph* 500, *Mem* 600, *Nun* 700, *Pe* 800, *Tzadi* 900. A dotted *Alpha* and a dashed *Aleph* have the value of 1,000.

the system may prove profitable, but it is without basis in antiquity. The arrangement of the letters and numbers is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	

The letters under each of the numbers have the value of the figure at the top of the column. Thus, in the word *man*, *M* = 4, *A* = 1, *N* = 5: a total of 10. The values of the numbers are practically the same as those given by the Pythagorean system.

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PYTHAGOREAN THEORY OF NUMBERS

(The following outline of Pythagorean mathematics is a paraphrase of the opening chapters of Thomas Taylor's *Theoretic Arithmetic*, the rarest and most important compilation of Pythagorean mathematical fragments extant.)

The Pythagoreans declared arithmetic to be the mother of the mathematical sciences. This is proved by the fact that geometry, music, and astronomy are dependent upon it but it is not dependent upon them. Thus, geometry may be removed but arithmetic will remain; but if arithmetic be removed, geometry is eliminated. In the same manner music depends upon arithmetic, but the elimination of music affects arithmetic only by limiting one of its expressions. The Pythagoreans also demonstrated arithmetic to be prior to astronomy, for the latter is dependent upon both geometry and music. The size, form, and motion of the celestial bodies is determined by the use of geometry; their harmony and rhythm by the use of music. If astronomy be removed, neither geometry nor music is injured; but if geometry and music be eliminated, astronomy is destroyed. The priority of both geometry and music to astronomy is therefore established. Arithmetic, however, is prior to all; it is primary and fundamental.

Pythagoras instructed his disciples that the science of mathematics is divided into two major parts. The first is concerned with the *multitude*, or the constituent parts of a thing, and the second with the *magnitude*, or the relative size or density of a thing.

*Magnitude* is divided into two parts--magnitude which is stationary and magnitude which is movable, the stationary part having priority. *Multitude* is also divided into two parts, for it is related both to itself and to other things, the first relationship having priority. Pythagoras assigned the science of arithmetic to multitude related to itself, and the art of music to multitude related to other things. Geometry likewise was assigned to stationary magnitude, and spherics (used partly in the sense of astronomy) to movable magnitude. Both multitude and magnitude were circumscribed by the circumference of mind. The atomic theory has proved size to be the result of number, for a mass is made up of minute units though mistaken by the uninformed for a single simple substance.



Owing to the fragmentary condition of existing Pythagorean records, it is difficult to arrive at exact definitions of terms. Before it is possible, however, to unfold the subject further some light must be cast upon the meanings of the words number, monad, and one.

The *monad* signifies (a) the all-including ONE. The Pythagoreans called the monad the "noble number, Sire of Gods and men." The monad also signifies (b) the sum of any combination of numbers considered as a whole. Thus, the universe is considered as a monad, but the individual parts of the universe (such as the planets and elements) are monads in relation to the parts of which they themselves are composed, though they, in turn, are parts of the greater monad formed of their sum. The monad may also be likened (c) to the seed of a tree which, when it has grown, has many branches (the numbers). In other words, the numbers are to the monad what the branches of the tree are to the seed of the tree. From the study of the mysterious Pythagorean monad, Leibnitz evolved his magnificent theory of the world atoms--a theory in perfect accord with the ancient teachings of the Mysteries, for Leibnitz himself was an initiate of a secret school. By some Pythagoreans the monad is also considered (d) synonymous with the *one*.

*Number* is the term applied to all numerals and their combinations. (A strict interpretation of the term number by certain of the Pythagoreans excludes 1 and 2.) Pythagoras defines *number* to be the extension and energy of the spermatric reasons contained in the monad. The followers of Hippasus declared number to be the first pattern used by the Demiurgus in the formation of the universe.

The *one* was defined by the Platonists as "the summit of the many." The *one* differs from the monad in that the term *monad* is used to designate the sum of the parts considered as a unit, whereas the *one* is the term applied to each of its integral parts.

There are two orders of number: *odd* and *even*. Because unity, or 1, always remains indivisible, the odd number cannot be divided equally. Thus, 9 is 4+1+4, the unity in the center being indivisible. Furthermore, if any odd number be divided into two parts, one part will always be odd and the other even. Thus, 9 may be 5+4, 3+6, 7+2, or 8+1. The Pythagoreans considered the odd number--of which the monad was the prototype--to be definite and masculine. They were not all agreed, however, as to the nature of unity, or 1. Some declared it to be positive, because if added to an even (negative) number, it produces an odd

(positive) number. Others demonstrated that if unity be added to an odd number, the latter becomes even, thereby making the masculine to be feminine. Unity, or 1, therefore, was considered an androgynous number, partaking of both the masculine and the feminine attributes; consequently both odd and even. For this reason the Pythagoreans called it *evenly-odd*. It was customary for the Pythagoreans to offer sacrifices of an uneven number of objects to the superior gods, while to the goddesses and subterranean spirits an even number was offered.

Any even number may be divided into two equal parts, which are always either both odd or both even. Thus, 10 by equal division gives 5+5, both odd numbers. The same principle holds true if the 10 be unequally divided. For example, in 6+4, both parts are even; in 7+3, both parts are odd; in 8+2, both parts are again even; and in 9+1, both parts are again odd. Thus, in the even number, however it may be divided, the parts will always be both odd or both even. The Pythagoreans considered the even number-of which the *duad* was the prototype--to be indefinite and feminine.

The odd numbers are divided by a mathematical contrivance--called "the Sieve of Eratosthenes"--into three general classes: *incomposite*, *composite*, and *incomposite-composite*.

The *incomposite* numbers are those which have no divisor other than themselves and unity, such as 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41, 43, 47, and so forth. For example, 7 is divisible only by 7, which goes into itself once, and unity, which goes into 7 seven times.

The *composite* numbers are those which are divisible not only by themselves and unity but also by some other number, such as 9, 15, 21, 25, 27, 33, 39, 45, 51, 57, and so forth. For example, 21 is divisible not only by itself and by unity, but also by 3 and by 7.

The *incomposite-composite* numbers are those which have no common divisor, although each of itself is capable of division, such as 9 and 25. For example, 9 is divisible by 3 and 25 by 5, but neither is divisible by the divisor of the other; thus they have no common divisor. Because they have individual divisors, they are called composite; and because they have no common divisor, they are called in, composite. Accordingly, the term *incomposite-composite* was created to describe their properties.

*Even* numbers are divided into three classes: *evenly-even*, *evenly-odd*, and *oddly-odd*.

The *evenly-even* numbers are all in duple ratio from unity; thus: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, and 1,024. The proof of the perfect *evenly-even* number is that it can be halved and the halves again halved back to unity, as  $1/2$  of 64 = 32;  $1/2$  of 32 = 16;  $1/2$  of 16 = 8;  $1/2$  of 8 = 4;  $1/2$  of 4 = 2;  $1/2$  of 2 = 1; beyond unity it is impossible to go.

The *evenly-even* numbers possess certain unique properties. The sum of any number of terms but the last term is always equal to the last term minus one. For example: the sum of the first and second terms (1+2) equals the third term (4) minus one; or, the sum of the first, second, third, and fourth terms (1+2+4+8) equals the fifth term (16) minus one.

In a series of *evenly-even* numbers, the first multiplied by the last equals the last, the second multiplied by the second from the last equals the last, and so on until in an odd series one number remains, which multiplied by itself equals the last number of the series; or, in an even series two numbers remain, which multiplied by each other give the last number of the series. For example: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16 is an odd series. The first number (1) multiplied by the last number (16) equals the last number (16). The second number (2) multiplied by the second from the last number (8) equals the last number (16). Being an odd series, the 4 is left in the center, and this multiplied by itself also equals the last number (16).

The *evenly-odd* numbers are those which, when halved, are incapable of further division by halving. They are formed by taking the odd numbers in sequential order and multiplying them by 2. By this process the odd numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 produce the evenly-odd numbers, 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 22. Thus, every fourth number is evenly-odd. Each of the even-odd numbers may be divided once, as 2, which becomes two 1's and cannot be divided further; or 6, which becomes two 3's and cannot be divided further.

Another peculiarity of the evenly-odd numbers is that if the divisor be odd the quotient is always even, and if the divisor be even the quotient is always odd. For example: if 18 be divided by 2 (an even divisor) the quotient is 9 (an odd number); if 18 be divided by 3 (an odd divisor) the quotient is 6 (an even number).

The evenly-odd numbers are also remarkable in that each term is one-half of the sum of the terms on either side of it. For example:

[illegible]

THE SIEVE OF ERATOSTHENES.

Redrawn from Taylor's *Theoretic Arithmetic*.

This sieve is a mathematical device originated by Eratosthenes about 230 B.C. for the purpose of segregating the composite and incomposite odd numbers. Its use is extremely simple after the theory has once been mastered. All the odd numbers are first arranged in their natural order as shown in the second panel from the bottom, designated *Odd Numbers*. It will then be seen that every third number (beginning with 3) is divisible by 3, every fifth number (beginning with 5); is divisible by 5, every seventh number (beginning with 7) is divisible by 7, every ninth number (beginning with 9) is divisible by 9, every eleventh number (beginning with 11) is divisible by 11, and so on to infinity. This system finally sifts out what the Pythagoreans called the "incomposite" numbers, or those having no divisor other than themselves and unity. These will be found in the lowest panel, designated *Primary and Incomposite Numbers*. In his *History of Mathematics*, David Eugene Smith states that Eratosthenes was one of the greatest scholars of Alexandria and was called by his admirers "the second Plato." Eratosthenes was educated at Athens, and is renowned not only for his sieve but for having computed, by a very ingenious method, the circumference and diameter of the earth. His estimate of the earth's diameter was only 50 miles less than the polar diameter accepted by modern scientists. This and other mathematical achievements of Eratosthenes, are indisputable evidence that in the third century before Christ the Greeks not only knew the earth to be spherical in form but could also approximate, with amazing accuracy, its actual size and distance from both the sun and the moon. Aristarchus of Samos, another great Greek astronomer and mathematician, who lived about 250 B.C., established by philosophical deduction and a few simple scientific instruments that the earth revolved around the sun. While Copernicus actually believed himself to be the discoverer of this fact, he but restated the findings advanced by Aristarchus seventeen hundred years earlier.

10 is one-half of the sum of 6 and 14; 18 is one-half the sum of 14 and 22; and 6 is one-half the sum of 2 and 10.

The oddly-odd, or unevenly-even, numbers are a compromise between the evenly-even and the evenly-odd numbers. Unlike the evenly-even, they cannot be halved back to unity; and unlike the evenly-odd, they are capable of more than one division by halving. The oddly-odd numbers are formed by multiplying the evenly-even numbers above 2 by the odd numbers above one. The odd numbers above one are 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and so forth. The evenly-even numbers above 2 are 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, and soon. The first odd number of the series (3) multiplied by 4 (the first evenly-even number of the series) gives 12, the first oddly-odd number. By multiplying 5, 7, 9, 11, and so forth, by 4, oddly-odd numbers are found. The other oddly-odd numbers are produced by multiplying 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and so forth, in turn, by the other evenly-even numbers (8, 16, 32, 64, and so forth). An example of the halving of the oddly-odd number is as follows:  $1/2$  of 12 = 6;  $1/2$  of 6 = 3, which cannot be halved further because the Pythagoreans did not divide unity.

Even numbers are also divided into three other classes: *superperfect*, *deficient*, and *perfect*.

*Superperfect* or *superabundant* numbers are such as have the sum of their fractional parts greater than themselves. For example:  $1/2$  of 24 = 12;  $1/4$  = 6;  $1/3$  = 8;  $1/6$  = 4;  $1/12$  = 2; and  $1/24$  = 1. The sum of these parts (12+6+8+4+2+1) is 33, which is in excess of 24, the original number.

*Deficient* numbers are such as have the sum of their fractional parts less than themselves. For example:  $1/2$  of 14 = 7;  $1/7$  = 2; and  $1/14$  = 1. The sum of these parts (7+2+1) is 10, which is less than 14, the original number.

*Perfect* numbers are such as have the sum of their fractional parts equal to themselves. For example:  $1/2$  of 28 = 14;  $1/4$  = 7;  $1/7$  = 4;  $1/14$  = 2; and  $1/28$  = 1. The sum of these parts (14+7+4+2+1) is equal to 28.

The perfect numbers are extremely rare. There is only one between 1 and 10, namely, 6; one between 10 and 100, namely, 28; one between 100 and 1,000, namely, 496; and one between 1,000 and 10,000, namely, 8,128. The perfect numbers are found by the following rule: The first number of the evenly-even series of numbers (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, and so forth) is added to the second number of the series, and if an incomposite

number results it is multiplied by the last number of the series of evenly-even numbers whose sum produced it. The product is the first perfect number. For example: the first and second evenly-even numbers are 1 and 2. Their sum is 3, an incomposite number. If 3 be multiplied by 2, the last number of the series of evenly-even numbers used to produce it, the product is 6, the first perfect number. If the addition of the evenly-even numbers does not result in an incomposite number, the next evenly-even number of the series must be added until an incomposite number results. The second perfect number is found in the following manner: The sum of the evenly-even numbers 1, 2, and 4 is 7, an incomposite number. If 7 be multiplied by 4 (the last of the series of evenly-even numbers used to produce it) the product is 28, the second perfect number. This method of calculation may be continued to infinity.

Perfect numbers when multiplied by 2 produce superabundant numbers, and when divided by 2 produce deficient numbers.

The Pythagoreans evolved their philosophy from the science of numbers. The following quotation from Theoretic Arithmetic is an excellent example of this practice:

"Perfect numbers, therefore, are beautiful images of the virtues which are certain media between excess and defect, and are not summits, as by some of the ancients they were supposed to be. And evil indeed is opposed to evil, but both are opposed to one good. Good, however, is never opposed to good, but to two evils at one and the same time. Thus timidity is opposed to audacity, to both [of] which the want of true courage is common; but both timidity and audacity are opposed to fortitude. Craft also is opposed to fatuity, to both [of] which the want of intellect is common; and both these are opposed to prudence. Thus, too, profusion is opposed to avarice, to both [of] which illiberality is common; and both these are opposed to liberality. And in a similar manner in the other virtues; by all [of] which it is evident that perfect numbers have a great similitude to the virtues. But they also resemble the virtues on another account; for they are rarely found, as being few, and they are generated in a very constant order. On the contrary, an infinite multitude of superabundant and diminished numbers may be found, nor are they disposed in any orderly series, nor generated from any certain end; and hence they have a great similitude to the vices, which are numerous, inordinate, and indefinite."

## THE TABLE OF THE TEN NUMBERS

(The following outline of the Pythagorean numbers is a paraphrase of the writings of Nicomachus, Theon of Smyrna, Proclus, Porphyry, Plutarch, Clement of Alexandria, Aristotle, and other early authorities.)

*Monad*--1--is so called because it remains always in the same condition--that is, separate from multitude. Its attributes are as follows: It is called mind, because the mind is stable and has preeminence; hermaphrodism, because it is both male and female; odd and even, for being added to the even it makes odd, and to the odd, even; God, because it is the beginning and end of all, but itself has neither beginning nor end; good, for such is the nature of God; the receptacle of matter, because it produces the duad, which is essentially material.

By the Pythagoreans monad was called chaos, obscurity, chasm, Tartarus, Styx, abyss, Lethe, Atlas, Axis, Morpho (a name for Venus), and Tower or Throne of Jupiter, because of the great power which abides in the center of the universe and controls the circular motion of the planers about itself. Monad is also called germinal reason, because it is the origin of all the thoughts in the universe. Other names given to it were: Apollo, because of its relation to the sun; Prometheus, because he brought man light; Pyralios, one who exists in fire; geniture, because without it no number can exist; substance, because substance is primary; cause of truth; and constitution of symphony: all these because it is the primordial one.

Between greater and lesser the monad is equal; between intention and remission it is middle; in multitude it is mean; and in time it is now, because eternity knows neither past nor future. It is called Jupiter, because he is Father and head of the gods; Vesta, the fire of the home, because it is located in the midst of the universe and remains there inclining to no side as a dot in a circle; form, because it circumscribes, comprehends, and terminates; love, concord, and piety, because it is indivisible. Other symbolic names for the monad are ship, chariot, Proteus (a god capable of changing his form), Mnemosyne, and Polyonymous (having many names).

The following symbolic names were given to the duad--2--because it has been divided, and is two rather than one; and when there are two, each is opposed to the other: genius, evil, darkness, inequality, instability, movability, boldness, fortitude, contention, matter, dissimilarity,

partition between multitude and monad, defect, shapelessness, indefiniteness, indeterminate ness, harmony, tolerance, root, feet of fountain-abounding idea, top, Phanes, opinion, fallacy, alterity, diffidence, impulse, death, motion, generation, mutation, division, longitude, augmentation, composition, communion, misfortune, sustentation, imposition, marriage, soul, and science.

In his book, *Numbers*, W. Wynn Westcott says of the duad: "it was called 'Audacity,' from its being the earliest number to separate itself from the Divine One; from the 'Aduytum of God-nourished Silence,' as the Chaldean oracles say."

As the monad is the father, so the duad is the mother; therefore, the duad has certain points in common with the goddesses Isis, Rhea (Jove's mother), Phrygia, Lydia, Dindymene (Cybele), and Ceres; Erato (one of the Muses); Diana, because the moon is forked; Dictynna, Venus, Dione, Cytherea; Juno, because she is both wife and sister of Jupiter; and Maia, the mother of Mercury.

While the monad is the symbol of wisdom, the duad is the symbol of ignorance, for in it exists the sense of separateness--which sense is the beginning of ignorance. The duad, however, is also the mother of wisdom, for ignorance--out of the nature of itself--invariably gives birth to wisdom.

The Pythagoreans revered the monad but despised the duad, because it was the symbol of polarity. By the power of the duad the deep was created in contradistinction to the heavens. The deep mirrored the heavens and became the symbol of illusion, for the below was merely a reflection of the above. The below was called *maya*, the illusion, the sea, the Great Void, and to symbolize it the Magi of Persia carried mirrors. From the duad arose disputes and contentions, until by bringing the monad between the duad, equilibrium was reestablished by the Savior-God, who took upon Himself the form of a number and was crucified between two thieves for the sins of men.

The triad--3--is the first number actually odd (monad not always being considered a number). It is the first equilibrium of unities; therefore, Pythagoras said that Apollo gave oracles from a tripod, and advised offer of libation three times. The keywords to the qualities of the triad are friendship, peace, justice, prudence, piety, temperance, and virtue. The following deities partake of the principles of the triad: Saturn (ruler



of time), Latona, Cornucopiæ, Ophion (the great serpent), Thetis, Hecate, Polyhymnia (a Muse), Pluto, Triton, President of the Sea, Tritogenia, Achelous, and the Faces, Furies, and Graces. This number is called wisdom, because men organize the present, foresee the future, and benefit by the experiences of the past. It is cause of wisdom and understanding. The triad is the number of knowledge--music, geometry, and astronomy, and the science of the celestials and terrestrials. Pythagoras taught that the cube of this number had the power of the lunar circle.

The sacredness of the triad and its symbol--the triangle--is derived from the fact that it is made up of the monad and the duad. The monad is the symbol of the Divine Father and the duad of the Great Mother. The triad being made of these two is therefore androgynous and is symbolic of the fact that God gave birth to His worlds out of Himself, who in His creative aspect is always symbolized by the triangle. The monad passing into the duad was thus capable of becoming the parent of progeny, for the duad was the womb of Meru, within which the world was incubated and within which it still exists in embryo.

The tetrad--4--was esteemed by the Pythagoreans as the primogenial number, the root of all things, the fountain of Nature and the most perfect number. All tetrads are intellectual; they have an emergent order and encircle the world as the Empyreum passes through it. Why the Pythagoreans expressed God as a tetrad is explained in a sacred discourse ascribed to Pythagoras, wherein God is called the Number of Numbers. This is because the decad, or 10, is composed of 1, 2, 3, and 4. The number 4 is symbolic of God because it is symbolic of the first four numbers. Moreover, the tetrad is the center of the week, being halfway between 1 and 7. The tetrad is also the first geometric solid.

Pythagoras maintained that the soul of man consists of a tetrad, the four powers of the soul being mind, science, opinion, and sense. The tetrad connects all beings, elements, numbers, and seasons; nor can anything be named which does not depend upon the tetractys. It is the Cause and Maker of all things, the intelligible God, Author of celestial and sensible good, Plutarch interprets this tetractys, which he said was also called the world, to be 36, consisting of the first four odd numbers added to the first four even numbers, thus:

$$1 + 3 + 5 + 7 = 16$$

$$2 + 4 + 6 + 8 = 20$$

$$36$$

Keywords given to the tetrad are impetuosity, strength, virility, two-mothered, and the key keeper of Nature, because the universal constitution cannot be without it. It is also called harmony and the first profundity. The following deities partook of the nature of the tetrad: Hercules, Mercury, Vulcan, Bacchus, and Urania (one of the Muses).

The triad represents the primary colors and the major planets, while the tetrad represents the secondary colors and the minor planets. From the first triangle come forth the seven spirits, symbolized by a triangle and a square. These together form the Masonic apron.

The pentad--5--is the union of an odd and an even number (3 and 2). Among the Greeks, the pentagram was a sacred symbol of light, health, and vitality. It also symbolized the fifth element--ether--because it is free from the disturbances of the four lower elements. It is called equilibrium, because it divides the perfect number 10 into two equal parts.

The pentad is symbolic of Nature, for, when multiplied by itself it returns into itself, just as grains of wheat, starting in the form of seed, pass through Nature's processes and reproduce the seed of the wheat as the ultimate form of their own growth. Other numbers multiplied by themselves produce other numbers, but only 5 and 6 multiplied by themselves represent and retain their original number as the last figure in their products.

The pentad represents all the superior and inferior beings. It is sometimes referred to as the hierophant, or the priest of the Mysteries, because of its connection with the spiritual ethers, by means of which mystic development is attained. Keywords of the pentad are reconciliation, alternation, marriage, immortality, cordiality, Providence, and sound. Among the deities who partook of the nature of the pentad were Pallas, Nemesis, Bubastia (Bast), Venus, Androgyia, Cytherea, and the messengers of Jupiter.

The tetrad (the elements) plus the monad equals the pentad. The Pythagoreans taught that the elements of earth, fire, air, and water were permeated by a substance called ether--the basis of vitality and life. Therefore, they chose the five-pointed star, or pentagram, as the symbol of vitality, health, and interpenetration.

It was customary for the philosophers to conceal the element of earth under the symbol of a dragon, and many of the heroes of antiquity were told to go forth and slay the dragon. Hence, they drove their sword (the monad) into the body of

the dragon (the tetrad). This resulted in the formation of the pentad, a symbol of the victory of the spiritual nature over the material nature. The four elements are symbolized in the early Biblical writings as the four rivers that poured out of Garden of Eden. The elements themselves are under the control of the composite Cherubim of Ezekiel.

The Pythagoreans held the hexad--6--to represent, as Clement of Alexandria conceived, the creation of the world according to both the prophets and the ancient Mysteries. It was called by the Pythagoreans the perfection of all the parts. This number was particularly sacred to Orpheus, and also to the Fate, Lachesis, and the Muse, Thalia. It was called the form of forms, the articulation of the universe, and the maker of the soul.

Among the Greeks, harmony and the soul were considered to be similar in nature, because all souls are harmonic. The hexad is also the symbol of marriage, because it is formed by the union of two triangles, one masculine and the other feminine. Among the keywords given to the hexad are: time, for it is the measure of duration; panacea, because health is equilibrium, and the hexad is a balance number; the world, because the world, like the hexad, is often seen to consist of contraries by harmony; omnisufficient, because its parts are sufficient for totality ( $3 + 2 + 1 = 6$ ); unwearied, because it contains the elements of immortality.

By the Pythagoreans the heptad--7--was called "worthy of veneration." It was held to be the number of religion, because man is controlled by seven celestial spirits to whom it is proper for him to make offerings. It was called the number of life, because it was believed that human creatures born in the seventh month of embryonic life usually lived, but those born in the eighth month often died. One author called it the Motherless Virgin, Minerva, because it was not born of a mother but out of the crown, or the head of the Father, the monad. Keywords of the heptad are fortune, occasion, custody, control, government, judgment, dreams, voices, sounds, and that which leads all things to their end. Deities whose attributes were expressed by the heptad were Ægis, Osiris, Mars, and Cleo (one of the Muses).

Among many ancient nations the heptad is a sacred number. The Elohim of the Jews were supposedly seven in number. They were the Spirits of the Dawn, more commonly known as the Archangels controlling the planets. The seven Archangels, with the three spirits controlling the sun in its threefold aspect, constitute the 10, the sacred Pythagorean decad. The mysterious Pythagorean tetractys, or four rows of dots, increasing from 1 to 4, was symbolic of the stages of creation. The great Pythagorean truth that all things in Nature are regenerated through the decad, or 10, is subtly preserved in Freemasonry through these grips being effected by the uniting of 10 fingers, five on the hand of each person.

The 3 (spirit, mind, and soul) descend into the 4 (the world), the sum being the 7, or the mystic nature of man, consisting of a threefold spiritual body and a fourfold material form. These are symbolized by the cube, which has six surfaces

and a mysterious seventh point within. The six surfaces are the directions: north, east, south, west, up, and down; or, front, back, right, left, above, and below; or again, earth, fire, air, water, spirit, and matter. In the midst of these stands the 1, which is the upright figure of man, from whose center in the cube radiate six pyramids. From this comes the great occult axiom: "The center is the father of the directions, the dimensions, and the distances."

The heptad is the number of the law, because it is the number of the Makers of Cosmic law, the Seven Spirits before the Throne.

The ogdoad--8--was sacred because it was the number of the first cube, which form had eight corners, and was the only evenly-even number under 10 (1-2-4-8-4-2-1). Thus, the 8 is divided into two 4's, each 4 is divided into two 2's, and each 2 is divided into two 1's, thereby reestablishing the monad. Among the keywords of the ogdoad are love, counsel, prudence, law, and convenience. Among the divinities partaking of its nature were Panarmonia, Rhea, Cibeles, Cadmæa, Dindymene, Orcia, Neptune, Themis, and Euterpe (a Muse).

The ogdoad was a mysterious number associated with the Eleusinian Mysteries of Greece and the Cabiri. It was called the little holy number. It derived its form partly from the twisted snakes on the Caduceus of Hermes and partly from the serpentine motion of the celestial bodies; possibly also from the moon's nodes.

The ennead--9--was the first square of an odd number (3x3). It was associated with failure and shortcoming because it fell short of the perfect number 10 by one. It was called the number of man, because of the nine months of his embryonic life. Among its keywords are ocean and horizon, because to the ancients these were boundless. The ennead is the limitless number because there is nothing beyond it but the infinite 10. It was called boundary and limitation, because it gathered all numbers within itself. It was called the sphere of the air, because it surrounded the numbers as air surrounds the earth. Among the gods and goddesses who partook in greater or less degree of its nature were Prometheus, Vulcan, Juno, the sister and wife of Jupiter, Pæan, and Aglaia, Tritogenia, Curetes, Proserpine, Hyperion, and Terpsichore (a Muse).

The 9 was looked upon as evil, because it was an inverted 6. According to the Eleusinian Mysteries, it was the number of the spheres through which the consciousness passed on its way to birth. Because of its close resemblance to the spermatozoon, the 9 has been associated with germinal life.

The decad--10--according to the Pythagoreans, is the greatest of numbers, not only because it is the tetractys (the 10 dots) but because it comprehends all arithmetic and harmonic proportions. Pythagoras said that 10 is the nature of number, because all nations reckon to it and when they arrive at it they return to the monad. The decad was called both heaven and the world, because the former includes the latter. Being a perfect number, the decad was applied by the

Pythagoreans to those things relating to age, power, faith, necessity, and the power of memory. It was also called unwearied, because, like God, it was tireless. The Pythagoreans divided the heavenly bodies into ten orders. They also stated that the decad perfected all numbers and comprehended within itself the nature of odd and even, moved and unmoved, good and ill. They associated its power with the following deities: Atlas (for it carried the numbers on its shoulders), Urania, Mnemosyne, the Sun, Phanes, and the One God.

The decimal system can probably be traced back to the time when it was customary to reckon on the fingers, these being among the most primitive of calculating devices and still in use among many aboriginal peoples.

## The Pythagorean Concepts of Music and Color

HARMONY is a state recognized by great philosophers as the immediate prerequisite of beauty. A compound is termed *beautiful* only when its parts are in *harmonious* combination. The world is called beautiful and its Creator is designated the *Good* because good perforce must act in conformity with its own nature; and good acting according to its own nature is harmony, because the good which it accomplishes is harmonious with the good which it is. Beauty, therefore, is harmony manifesting its own intrinsic nature in the world of form.

The universe is made up of successive gradations of good, these gradations ascending from matter (which is the least degree of good) to spirit (which is the greatest degree of good). In man, his superior nature is the *summum bonum*. It therefore follows that his highest nature most readily cognizes good because the good external to him in the world is in harmonic ratio with the good present in his soul. What man terms *evil* is therefore, in common with matter, merely the least degree of its own opposite. The least degree of good presupposes likewise the least degree of harmony and beauty. Thus deformity (evil) is really the least harmonious combination of elements naturally harmonic as individual units. Deformity is unnatural, for, the sum of all things being the *Good*, it is natural that all things should partake of the *Good* and be arranged in combinations that are harmonious. Harmony is the manifesting expression of the *Will* of the eternal *Good*.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC

It is highly probable that the Greek initiates gained their knowledge of the philosophic and therapeutic aspects of music from the Egyptians, who, in turn, considered Hermes the founder of the art. According to one legend, this god constructed the first lyre by stretching strings across the concavity of a turtle shell. Both Isis and Osiris were patrons of music and poetry. Plato, in describing the antiquity of these arts among the Egyptians, declared that songs and poetry had existed in Egypt for at least ten thousand years, and that these were of such an exalted and inspiring nature that only gods or godlike men could have composed them. In the Mysteries the lyre was regarded as the secret symbol of the human constitution, the body of the instrument representing the physical form, the strings the nerves, and the musician the spirit. Playing upon the nerves, the spirit thus created the harmonies of normal functioning, which, however, became discords if the nature of man were defiled.

While the early Chinese, Hindus, Persians, Egyptians, Israelites, and Greeks employed both vocal and instrumental music in their religious ceremonies, also to complement their poetry and drama, it remained for Pythagoras to raise the art to its true dignity by demonstrating its mathematical foundation. Although it is said that he himself was not a musician, Pythagoras is now generally credited with the discovery of the diatonic scale. Having first learned the divine theory of music from the priests of the various Mysteries into which he had been accepted, Pythagoras pondered for several years upon the laws governing consonance and dissonance. How he actually solved the problem is unknown, but the following explanation has been invented.

One day while meditating upon the problem of harmony, Pythagoras chanced to pass a brazier's shop where workmen were pounding out a piece of metal upon an anvil. By noting the variances in pitch between the sounds made by large hammers and those made by smaller implements, and carefully estimating the harmonies and discords resulting from combinations of these sounds, he gained his first clue to the musical intervals of the diatonic scale. He entered the shop, and after carefully examining the tools and making mental note of their weights, returned to his own house and constructed an arm of wood so that it: extended out from the wall of his room. At regular intervals along this arm he attached four cords, all of like composition, size, and weight. To the first of these he attached a twelve-pound weight, to the second a nine-pound weight, to the third an eight-pound weight, and to the fourth a six-pound weight. These different weights corresponded to the sizes of the braziers' hammers.

Pythagoras thereupon discovered that the first and fourth strings when sounded together produced the harmonic interval of the octave, for doubling the weight had the same effect as halving the string. The tension of the first string being twice that of the fourth string, their ratio was said to be 2:1, or duple. By similar experimentation he ascertained that the first and third string produced the harmony of the diapente, or the interval of the fifth. The tension of the first string being half again as much as that of the third string, their ratio was said to be 3:2, or sesquialter. Likewise the second and fourth strings, having the same ratio as the first and third strings, yielded a diapente harmony. Continuing his investigation, Pythagoras discovered that the first and second strings produced the harmony of the diatessaron, or the interval of the third; and the tension of the first string being a third greater than that of the second string, their ratio was said to be 4:3, or sesquitercian. The third and fourth strings, having the same ratio as the first and second strings, produced another harmony of the diatessaron. According to Iamblichus, the second and third strings had the ratio of 8:9, or epogdoan.

The key to harmonic ratios is hidden in the famous Pythagorean tetractys, or pyramid of dots. The *tetractys* is made up of the first four numbers--1, 2, 3, and 4--which in their proportions reveal the intervals of the octave, the diapente, and the diatessaron. While the law of harmonic intervals as set forth above is true, it has been subsequently proved that hammers striking metal in the manner

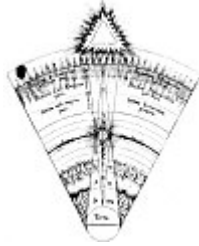


THE INTERVALS AND HARMONIES OF THE SPHERES.

From Stanley's *The History of Philosophy*.

In the Pythagorean concept of the music of the spheres, the interval between the earth and the sphere of the fixed stars was considered to be a diapason--the most perfect harmonic interval. The allowing arrangement is most generally accepted for the musical intervals of the planets between the earth and the sphere of the fixed stars: From the sphere of the earth to the sphere of the moon; one tone; from the sphere of the moon to that of Mercury, one half-tone; from Mercury to Venus, one-half; from Venus to the sun, one and one-half tones; from the sun to Mars, one tone; from Mars to Jupiter, one-half tone; from Jupiter to Saturn, one-

half tone; from Saturn to the fixed stars, one-half tone. The sum of these intervals equals the six whole tones of the octave.



THE CONSONANCES OF THE MUNDANE MONOCHORD.

From Fludd's *De Musica Mundana*.

This diagrammatic sector represents the major gradations of energy and substance between elemental earth and absolute unconditioned force. Beginning with the superior, the fifteen graduated spheres descend in the following order: Limitless and Eternal Life; the superior, the middle, and the inferior Empyrean; the seven planets; and the four elements. Energy is symbolized by Fludd as a pyramid with its base upon the concave surface of the superior Empyrean, and substance as another Pyramid with its base upon the convex surface of the sphere (not planet) of earth. These pyramids demonstrate the relative proportions of energy and substance entering into the composition of the fifteen planes of being. It will be noted that the ascending pyramid of substance touches but does not pierce the fifteenth sphere--that of Limitless and Eternal Life. Likewise, the descending pyramid of energy touches but does not pierce the first sphere--the grossest condition of substance. The plane of the sun is denominated the *sphere of equality*, for here neither energy nor substance predominate. The mundane monochord consists of a hypothetical string stretched from the base of the pyramid of energy to the base of the pyramid of substance.

described will not produce the various tones ascribed to them. In all probability, therefore, Pythagoras actually worked out his theory of harmony from the monochord--a contrivance consisting of a single string stretched between two pegs and supplied with movable frets.

To Pythagoras music was one of the dependencies of the divine science of mathematics, and its harmonies were inflexibly controlled by mathematical proportions. The Pythagoreans averred that mathematics demonstrated the exact method by which the good established and maintained its universe. Number therefore preceded harmony, since it was the immutable law that governs all harmonic proportions. After



discovering these harmonic ratios, Pythagoras gradually initiated his disciples into this, the supreme arcanum of his Mysteries. He divided the multitudinous parts of creation into a vast number of planes or spheres, to each of which he assigned a tone, a harmonic interval, a number, a name, a color, and a form. He then proceeded to prove the accuracy of his deductions by demonstrating them upon the different planes of intelligence and substance ranging from the most abstract logical premise to the most concrete geometrical solid. From the common agreement of these diversified methods of proof he established the indisputable existence of certain natural laws.

Having once established music as an exact science, Pythagoras applied his newly found law of harmonic intervals to all the phenomena of Nature, even going so far as to demonstrate the harmonic relationship of the planets, constellations, and elements to each other. A notable example of modern corroboration of ancient philosophical reaching is that of the progression of the elements according to harmonic ratios. While making a list of the elements in the ascending order of their atomic weights, John A. Newlands discovered at every eighth element a distinct repetition of properties. This discovery is known as the *law of octaves* in modern chemistry.

Since they held that harmony must be determined not by the sense perceptions but by reason and mathematics, the Pythagoreans called themselves *Canonicists*, as distinguished from musicians of the *Harmonic School*, who asserted taste and instinct to be the true normative principles of harmony. Recognizing, however, the profound effect of music upon the senses and emotions, Pythagoras did not hesitate to influence the mind and body with what he termed "musical medicine."

Pythagoras evinced such a marked preference for stringed instruments that he even went so far as to warn his disciples against allowing their ears to be defiled by the sounds of flutes or cymbals. He further declared that the soul could be purified from its irrational influences by solemn songs sung to the accompaniment of the lyre. In his investigation of the therapeutic value of harmonics, Pythagoras discovered that the seven modes--or keys--of the Greek system of music had the power to incite or allay the various emotions. It is related that while observing the stars one night he encountered a young man befuddled with strong drink and mad with jealousy who was piling faggots about his mistress' door with the intention of burning the house. The frenzy of the youth was accentuated by a flutist a short distance away who was playing a tune in the stirring Phrygian mode.

Pythagoras induced the musician to change his air to the slow, and rhythmic Spondaic mode, whereupon the intoxicated youth immediately became composed and, gathering up his bundles of wood, returned quietly to his own home.

There is also an account of how Empedocles, a disciple of Pythagoras, by quickly changing the mode of a musical composition he was playing, saved the life of his host, Anchitus, when the latter was threatened with death by the sword of one whose father he had condemned to public execution. It is also known that Esculapius, the Greek physician, cured sciatica and other diseases of the nerves by blowing a loud trumpet in the presence of the patient.

Pythagoras cured many ailments of the spirit, soul, and body by having certain specially prepared musical compositions played in the presence of the sufferer or by personally reciting short selections from such early poets as Hesiod and Homer. In his university at Crotona it was customary for the Pythagoreans to open and to close each day with songs--those in the morning calculated to clear the mind from sleep and inspire it to the activities of the coming day; those in the evening of a mode soothing, relaxing, and conducive to rest. At the vernal equinox, Pythagoras caused his disciples to gather in a circle around one of their number who led them in song and played their accompaniment upon a lyre.

The therapeutic music of Pythagoras is described by Iamblichus thus: "And there are certain melodies devised as remedies against the passions of the soul, and also against despondency and lamentation, which Pythagoras invented as things that afford the greatest assistance in these maladies. And again, he employed other melodies against rage and anger, and against every aberration of the soul. There is also another kind of modulation invented as a remedy against desires." (See *The Life of Pythagoras*.)

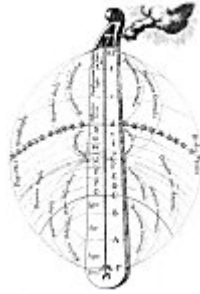
It is probable that the Pythagoreans recognized a connection between the seven Greek modes and the planets. As an example, Pliny declares that Saturn moves in the Dorian mode and Jupiter in the Phrygian mode. It is also apparent that the temperaments are keyed to the various modes, and the passions likewise. Thus, anger--which is a fiery passion--may be accentuated by a fiery mode or its power neutralized by a watery mode.

The far-reaching effect exercised by music upon the culture of the Greeks is thus summed up by Emil Nauman: "Plato depreciated the notion that music was intended solely to create cheerful and agreeable emotions, maintaining rather that it should inculcate a love of all that is noble, and hatred of all that is mean, and that nothing could more strongly influence man's innermost feelings than melody and rhythm. Firmly convinced of this, he agreed with Damon of Athens, the musical instructor of Socrates, that the introduction of a new and presumably enervating scale would endanger the future of a whole nation, and that it was not possible to alter a key without shaking the very foundations of the State. Plato affirmed that music which ennobled the mind was of a far higher kind than that which merely appealed to the senses, and he strongly insisted that it was the paramount duty of the Legislature to suppress all music of an effeminate and lascivious character, and to encourage only such as that which was pure and dignified; that bold and stirring melodies were for men, gentle and soothing ones for women. From this it is evident that music played a considerable part in the education of the Greek youth. The greatest care was also to be taken in the selection of instrumental music, because the absence of words rendered its signification doubtful, and it was difficult to foresee whether it would exercise upon the people a benign or baneful influence. Popular taste, being always tickled by sensuous and meretricious effects, was to be treated with deserved contempt. (See *The History of Music*.)

Even today martial music is used with telling effect in times of war, and religious music, while no longer developed in accordance with the ancient theory, still profoundly influences the emotions of the laity.

## THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

The most sublime but least known of all the Pythagorean speculations was that of sidereal harmonics. It was said that of all men only Pythagoras heard *the music of the spheres*. Apparently the Chaldeans were the first people to conceive of the heavenly bodies joining in a cosmic chant as they moved in stately manner across the sky. Job describes a time "when the stars of the morning sang together," and in *The Merchant of Venice* the author of the Shakesperian plays



THE MUNDANE MONOCHORD WITH ITS PROPORTIONS AND INTERVALS.

From Fludd's *De Musica Mundana*.

In this chart is set forth a summary of Fludd's theory of universal music. The interval between the element of earth and the highest heaven is considered as a double octave, thus showing the two extremes of existence to be in disdiapason harmony. It signifies that the highest heaven, the sun, and the earth have the same time, the difference being in pitch. The sun is the lower octave of the highest heaven and the earth the lower octave of the sun. The lower octave (Γ to G) comprises that part of the universe in which substance predominate over energy. Its harmonies, therefore, are more gross than those of the higher octave (G to g) wherein energy predominates over substance. "If struck in the more spiritual part," writes Fludd, "the monochord will give eternal life; if in the more material part, transitory life." It will be noted that certain elements, planets, and celestial spheres sustain a harmonic ratio to each other, Fludd advanced this as a key to the sympathies and antipathies existing between the various departments of Nature.

writes: "There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st but in his motion like an angel sings." So little remains, however, of the Pythagorean system of celestial music that it is only possible to approximate his actual theory.

Pythagoras conceived the universe to be an immense monochord, with its single string connected at its upper end to absolute spirit and at its lower end to absolute matter--in other words, a cord stretched between heaven and earth. Counting inward from the circumference of the heavens, Pythagoras, according to some authorities, divided the universe into nine parts; according to others, into twelve parts. The twelvefold system was as follows: The first division was called the *empyrean*, or the sphere of the fixed stars, and was the dwelling place of the immortals. The second to twelfth divisions were (in order) the spheres of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the sun, Venus, Mercury, and the

moon, and fire, air, water, and earth. This arrangement of the seven planets (the sun and moon being regarded as planets in the old astronomy) is identical with the candlestick symbolism of the Jews--the sun in the center as the main stem with three planets on either side of it.

The names given by the Pythagoreans to the various notes of the diatonic scale were, according to Macrobius, derived from an estimation of the velocity and magnitude of the planetary bodies. Each of these gigantic spheres as it rushed endlessly through space was believed to sound a certain tone caused by its continuous displacement of the *æthereal diffusion*. As these tones were a manifestation of divine order and motion, it must necessarily follow that they partook of the harmony of their own source. "The assertion that the planets in their revolutions round the earth uttered certain sounds differing according to their respective 'magnitude, celerity and local distance,' was commonly made by the Greeks. Thus Saturn, the farthest planet, was said to give the gravest note, while the Moon, which is the nearest, gave the sharpest. 'These sounds of the seven planets, and the sphere of the fixed stars, together with that above us [Antichthon], are the nine Muses, and their joint symphony is called Mnemosyne.'" (See *The Canon*.) This quotation contains an obscure reference to the ninefold division of the universe previously mentioned.

The Greek initiates also recognized a fundamental relationship between the individual heavens or spheres of the seven planets, and the seven sacred vowels. The first heaven uttered the sound of the sacred vowel A (Alpha); the second heaven, the sacred vowel E (Epsilon); the third, H (Eta); the fourth, I (Iota); the fifth, O (Omicron); the sixth, Y (Upsilon); and the seventh heaven, the sacred vowel Ω (Omega). When these seven heavens sing together they produce a perfect harmony which ascends as an everlasting praise to the throne of the Creator. (See Irenæus' *Against Heresies*.) Although not so stated, it is probable that the planetary heavens are to be considered as ascending in the Pythagorean order, beginning with the sphere of the moon, which would be the first heaven.

Many early instruments had seven Strings, and it is generally conceded that Pythagoras was the one who added the eighth string to the lyre of Terpander. The seven strings were always related both to their correspondences in the human body and to the planets. The names of God were also conceived to be formed from combinations of the seven planetary harmonies. The Egyptians confined their sacred songs to the seven primary sounds, forbidding any others to be uttered in their

temples. One of their hymns contained the following invocation: "The seven sounding tones praise Thee, the Great God, the ceaseless working Father of the whole universe." In another the Deity describes Himself thus: "I am the great indestructible lyre of the whole world, attuning the songs of the heavens. (See Nauman's *History of Music*.)

The Pythagoreans believed that everything which existed had a voice and that all creatures were eternally singing the praise of the Creator. Man fails to hear these divine melodies because his soul is enmeshed in the illusion of material existence. When he liberates himself from the bondage of the lower world with its sense limitations, *the music of the spheres* will again be audible as it was in the Golden Age. Harmony recognizes harmony, and when the human soul regains its true estate it will not only hear the celestial choir but also join with it in an everlasting anthem of praise to that Eternal *Good* controlling the infinite number of parts and conditions of Being.

The Greek Mysteries included in their doctrines a magnificent concept of the relationship existing between music and form. The elements of architecture, for example, were considered as comparable to musical modes and notes, or as having a musical counterpart. Consequently when a building was erected in which a number of these elements were combined, the structure was then likened to a musical chord, which was harmonic only when it fully satisfied the mathematical requirements of harmonic intervals. The realization of this analogy between sound and form led Goethe to declare that "architecture is crystallized music."

In constructing their temples of initiation, the early priests frequently demonstrated their superior knowledge of the principles underlying the phenomena known as vibration. A considerable part of the Mystery rituals consisted of invocations and intonements, for which purpose special sound chambers were constructed. A word whispered in one of these apartments was so intensified that the reverberations made the entire building sway and be filled with a deafening roar. The very wood and stone used in the erection of these sacred buildings eventually became so thoroughly permeated with the sound vibrations of the religious ceremonies that when struck they would reproduce the same tones thus repeatedly impressed into their substances by the rituals.

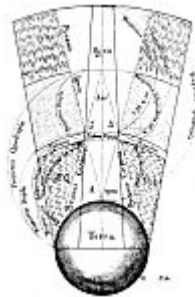
Every element in Nature has its individual keynote. If these elements are combined in a composite structure the result is a chord that, if sounded, will disintegrate the compound into its integral parts.

Likewise each individual has a keynote that, if sounded, will destroy him. The allegory of the walls of Jericho falling when the trumpets of Israel were sounded is undoubtedly intended to set forth the arcane significance of individual keynote or vibration.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF COLOR

"Light," writes Edwin D. Babbitt, "reveals the glories of the external world and yet is the most glorious of them all. It gives beauty, reveals beauty and is itself most beautiful. It is the analyzer, the truth-teller and the exposé of shams, for it shows things as they are. Its infinite streams measure off the universe and flow into our telescopes from stars which are quintillions of miles distant. On the other hand it descends to objects inconceivably small, and reveals through the microscope objects fifty millions of times less than can be seen by the naked eye. Like all other fine forces, its movement is wonderfully soft, yet penetrating and powerful. Without its vivifying influence, vegetable, animal, and human life must immediately perish from the earth, and general ruin take place. We shall do well, then, to consider this potential and beautiful principle of light and its component colors, for the more deeply we penetrate into its inner laws, the more will it present itself as a marvelous storehouse of power to vitalize, heal, refine, and delight mankind." (See *The Principles of Light and Color*.)

Since light is the basic physical manifestation of life, bathing all creation in its radiance, it is highly important to realize, in part at least, the subtle nature of this divine substance. That which is called *light* is actually a rate of vibration causing certain reactions upon the optic nerve. Few realize how they are walled in by the limitations



THE THEORY OF ELEMENTAL MUSIC.

In this diagram two interpenetrating pyramids are again employed, one of which represents fire and the other earth. It is demonstrated according to the law of elemental harmony that fire does not enter into the composition of earth nor earth into the composition of fire. The figures on the chart disclose the harmonic relationships existing between the four primary elements according to both Fludd and the Pythagoreans. Earth consists of four parts of its own nature; water of three parts of earth and one part of fire. The sphere of equality is a hypothetical point where there is an equilibrium of two parts of earth and two parts of fire. Air is composed of three parts of fire and one part of earth; fire, of four parts of its own nature. Thus earth and water bear to each other the ratio of 4 to 3, or the diatessaron harmony, and water and the sphere of equality the ratio of 3 to 2, or the diapente harmony. Fire and air also bear to each other the ratio of 4 to 3, or the diatessaron harmony, and air and the sphere of equality the ratio of 3 to 2, or the diapente harmony. As the sum of a diatessaron and a diapente equals a diapason, or octave, it is evident that both the sphere of fire and the sphere of earth are in diapason harmony with the sphere of equality, and also that fire and earth are in disdiapason harmony with each other.

of the sense perceptions. Not only is there a great deal more to light than anyone has ever seen but there are also unknown forms of light which no optical equipment will ever register. There are unnumbered colors which cannot be seen, as well as sounds which cannot be heard, odors which cannot be smelt, flavors which cannot be tasted, and substances which cannot be felt. Man is thus surrounded by a supersensible universe of which he knows nothing because the centers of sense perception within himself have not been developed sufficiently to respond to the subtler rates of vibration of which that universe is composed.

Among both civilized and savage peoples color has been accepted as a natural language in which to couch their religious and philosophical doctrines. The ancient city of Ecbatana as described by Herodotus, its seven walls colored according to the seven planets, revealed the knowledge of this subject possessed by the Persian Magi. The famous *zikkurat* or astronomical tower of the god Nebo at Borsippa ascended in seven great steps or stages, each step being painted in the key color of one of the planetary bodies. (See Lenormant's *Chaldean Magic*.) It is thus evident that the Babylonians were familiar with the concept of the spectrum in its relation to the seven Creative Gods or Powers. In India, one of the Mogul emperors caused a fountain to be made with seven levels. The water pouring down the sides through specially arranged channels changed color as it descended, passing sequentially through



all shades of the spectrum. In Tibet, color is employed by the native artists to express various moods. L. Austine Waddell, writing of Northern Buddhist art, notes that in Tibetan mythology "White and yellow complexions usually typify mild moods, while the red, blue, and black belong to fierce forms, though sometimes light blue, as indicating the sky, means merely celestial. Generally the gods are pictured white, goblins red, and devils black, like their European relative." (See *The Buddhism of Tibet*.)

In *Meno*, Plato, speaking through Socrates, describes color as "an effluence of form, commensurate with sight, and sensible." In *Theætetus* he discourses more at length on the subject thus: "Let us carry out the principle which has just been affirmed, that nothing is self-existent, and then we shall see that every color, white, black, and every other color, arises out of the eye meeting the appropriate motion, and that what we term the substance of each color is neither the active nor the passive element, but something which passes between them, and is peculiar to each percipient; are you certain that the several colors appear to every animal--say a dog--as they appear to you?"

In the Pythagorean *tetractys*--the supreme symbol of universal forces and processes--are set forth the theories of the Greeks concerning color and music. The first three dots represent the threefold White Light, which is the Godhead containing potentially all sound and color. The remaining seven dots are the colors of the spectrum and the notes of the musical scale. The colors and tones are the active creative powers which, emanating from the First Cause, establish the universe. The seven are divided into two groups, one containing three powers and the other four a relationship also shown in the *tetractys*. The higher group--that of three--becomes the spiritual nature of the created universe; the lower group--that of four--manifests as the irrational sphere, or inferior world.

In the Mysteries the seven *Logi*, or Creative Lords, are shown as streams of force issuing from the mouth of the Eternal One. This signifies the spectrum being extracted from the white light of the Supreme Deity. The seven Creators, or Fabricators, of the inferior spheres were called by the Jews the *Elohim*. By the Egyptians they were referred to as the *Builders* (sometimes as the *Governors*) and are depicted with great knives in their hands with which they carved the universe from its primordial substance. Worship of the planets is based upon their acceptance as the cosmic embodiments of the seven creative attributes of God. The Lords of the planets were described as dwelling within the body of the sun,

for the true nature of the sun, being analogous to the white light, contains the seeds of all the tone and color potencies which it manifests.

There are numerous arbitrary arrangements setting forth the mutual relationships of the planets, the colors, and the musical notes. The most satisfactory system is that based upon the *law of the octave*. The sense of hearing has a much wider scope than that of sight, for whereas the ear can register from nine to eleven octaves of sound the eye is restricted to the cognition of but seven fundamental color tones, or one tone short of the octave. Red, when posited as the lowest color tone in the scale of chromatics, thus corresponds to *do*, the first note of the musical scale. Continuing the analogy, orange corresponds to *re*, yellow to *mi*, green to *fa*, blue to *sol*, indigo to *la*, and violet to *si (ti)*. The eighth color tone necessary to complete the scale should be the higher octave of red, the first color tone. The accuracy of the above arrangement is attested by two striking facts: (1) the three fundamental notes of the musical scale--the first, the third, and the fifth--correspond with the three primary colors--red, yellow, and blue; (2) the seventh, and least perfect, note of the musical scale corresponds with purple, the least perfect tone of the color scale.

In *The Principles of Light and Color*, Edwin D. Babbitt confirms the correspondence of the color and musical scales: "As C is at the bottom of the musical scale and made with the coarsest waves of air, so is red at the bottom of the chromatic scale and made with the coarsest waves of luminous ether. As the musical note B [the seventh note of the scale] requires 45 vibrations of air every time the note C at the lower end of the scale requires 24, or but little over half as many, so does extreme violet require about 300 trillions of vibrations of ether in a second, while extreme red requires only about 450 trillions, which also are but little more than half as many. When one musical octave is finished another one commences and progresses with just twice as many vibrations as were used in the first octave, and so the same notes are repeated on a finer scale. In the same way when the scale of colors visible to the ordinary eye is completed in the violet, another octave of finer invisible colors, with just twice as many vibrations, will commence and progress on precisely the same law."

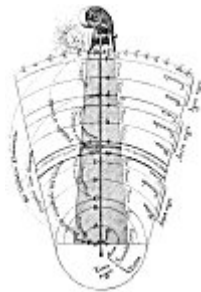
When the colors are related to the twelve signs of the zodiac, they are arranged as the spokes of a wheel. To Aries is assigned pure red; to Taurus, red-orange; to Gemini, pure orange; to Cancer, orange-yellow; to Leo, pure yellow; to Virgo, yellow-green; to Libra, pure green; to

Scorpio, green-blue; to Sagittarius, pure blue; to Capricorn, blue-violet; to Aquarius, pure violet; and to Pisces, violet-red.

In expounding the Eastern system of esoteric philosophy, H. P. Blavatsky relates the colors to the septenary constitution of man and the seven states of matter as follows:

COLOR	PRINCIPLES OF MAN	STATES OF MATTER
Violet	<i>Chaya</i> , or Etheric Double	Ether
Indigo	Higher <i>Manas</i> , or Spiritual Intelligence	Critical State called Air
Blue	Auric Envelope	Steam or Vapor
Green	Lower <i>Manas</i> , or Animal Soul	Critical State
Yellow	<i>Buddhi</i> , or Spiritual Soul	Water
Orange	<i>Prana</i> , or Life Principle	Critical State
Red	<i>Kama Rupa</i> , or Seat of Animal Life	Ice

This arrangement of the colors of the spectrum and the musical notes of the octave necessitates a different grouping of the planets in order to preserve their proper tone and color analogies. Thus *do* becomes Mars; *re*, the sun; *mi*, Mercury; *fa*, Saturn; *sol*, Jupiter; *la*, Venus; *si* (*ti*) the moon. (See *The E. S. Instructions*.)



THE FOUR ELEMENTS AND THEIR CONSONANTAL INTERVALS.

In this diagram Fludd has divided each of the four Primary elements into three subdivisions. The first division of each element is the grossest, partaking somewhat of the substance directly inferior to itself (except in the case of the earth, which has no state inferior to itself). The second division consists of the element in its relatively pure state, while the third division is that condition wherein the element partakes somewhat of the substance immediately superior to itself. For example the lowest division of the element of water is sedimentary, as it contains earth substance in solution; the second division represents water in its most common state--salty--as in the case of the ocean; and the third division is water in its purest state--free from salt. The harmonic interval assigned to the lowest division of each element is one tone, to the central division also a tone, but to the higher division a half-tone because it partakes of the division immediately above it. Fludd emphasizes the fact that as the elements ascend in series of two and a half tones, the diatessaron is the dominating harmonic interval of the elements.

## The Human Body in Symbolism

THE oldest, the most profound, the most universal of all symbols is the human body. The Greeks, Persians, Egyptians, and Hindus considered a philosophical analysis of man's triune nature to be an indispensable part of ethical and religious training. The Mysteries of every nation taught that the laws, elements, and powers of the universe were epitomized in the human constitution; that everything which existed outside of man had its analogue within man. The universe, being immeasurable in its immensity and inconceivable in its profundity, was beyond mortal estimation. Even the gods themselves could comprehend but a part of the inaccessible glory which was their source. When temporarily permeated with divine enthusiasm, man may transcend for a brief moment the limitations of his own personality and behold in part that celestial effulgence in which all creation is bathed. But even in his periods of greatest illumination man is incapable of imprinting upon the substance of his rational soul a perfect image of the multiform expression of celestial activity.

Recognizing the futility of attempting to cope intellectually with that which transcends the comprehension of the rational faculties, the early philosophers turned their attention from the inconceivable Divinity to man himself, with in the narrow confines of whose nature they found manifested all the mysteries of the external spheres. As the natural outgrowth of this practice there was fabricated a secret theological

system in which God was considered as the Grand Man and, conversely, man as the little god. Continuing this analogy, the universe was regarded as a man and, conversely, man as a miniature universe. The greater universe was termed the *Macrocosm*--the Great World or Body--and the Divine Life or spiritual entity controlling its functions was called the *Macroprosophus*. Man's body, or the individual human universe, was termed the *Microcosm*, and the Divine Life or spiritual entity controlling its functions was called the *Microprosophus*. The pagan Mysteries were primarily concerned with instructing neophytes in the true relationship existing between the *Macrocosm* and the *Microcosm*--in other words, between God and man. Accordingly, the key to these analogies between the organs and functions of the *Microcosmic* man and those of the *Macrocosmic* Man constituted the most prized possession of the early initiates.

In *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. Blavatsky summarizes the pagan concept of man as follows: "Man is a little world--a microcosm inside the great universe. Like a fetus, he is suspended, by all his *three* spirits, in the matrix of the macrocosmos; and while his terrestrial body is in constant sympathy with its parent earth, his astral soul lives in unison with the sidereal *anima mundi*. He is in it, as it is in him, for the world-pervading element fills all space, and is space itself, only shoreless and infinite. As to his third spirit, the divine, what is it but an infinitesimal ray, one of the countless radiations proceeding directly from the Highest Cause--the Spiritual Light of the World? This is the trinity of organic and inorganic nature--the spiritual and the physical, which are three in one, and of which Proclus says that 'The first monad is the Eternal God; the second, eternity; the third, the paradigm, or pattern of the universe;' the three constituting the Intelligible Triad."

Long before the introduction of idolatry into religion, the early priests caused the statue of a man to be placed in the sanctuary of the temple. This human figure symbolized the Divine Power in all its intricate manifestations. Thus the priests of antiquity accepted man as their textbook, and through the study of him learned to understand the greater and more abstruse mysteries of the celestial scheme of which they were a part. It is not improbable that this mysterious figure standing over the primitive altars was made in the nature of a manikin and, like certain emblematic hands in the Mystery schools, was covered with either carved or painted hieroglyphs. The statue may have opened, thus showing the relative positions of the organs, bones, muscles, nerves, and other parts. After ages of research, the manikin became a mass of intricate hieroglyphs and symbolic figures. Every part had its

secret meaning. The measurements formed a basic standard by means of which it was possible to measure all parts of cosmos. It was a glorious composite emblem of all the knowledge possessed by the sages and hierophants.

Then came the age of idolatry. The Mysteries decayed from within. The secrets were lost and none knew the identity of the mysterious man who stood over the altar. It was remembered only that the figure was a sacred and glorious symbol of the Universal Power, and it: finally came to be looked upon as a god--the One in whose image man was made. Having lost the knowledge of the purpose for which the manikin was originally constructed, the priests worshiped this effigy until at last their lack of spiritual understanding brought the temple down in ruins about their heads and the statue crumbled with the civilization that had forgotten its meaning.

Proceeding from this assumption of the first theologians that man is actually fashioned in the image of God, the initiated minds of past ages erected the stupendous structure of theology upon the foundation of the human body. The religious world of today is almost totally ignorant of the fact that the science of biology is the fountainhead of its doctrines and tenets. Many of the codes and laws believed by modern divines to have been direct revelations from Divinity are in reality the fruitage of ages of patient delving into the intricacies of the human constitution and the infinite wonders revealed by such a study.

In nearly all the sacred books of the world can be traced an anatomical analogy. This is most evident in their creation myths. Anyone familiar with embryology and obstetrics will have no difficulty in recognizing the basis of the allegory concerning Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden, the nine degrees of the Eleusinian Mysteries, and the Brahmanic legend of Vishnu's incarnations. The story of the Universal Egg, the Scandinavian myth of Ginnungagap (the dark cleft in space in which the seed of the world is sown), and the use of the fish as the emblem of the paternal generative power--all show the true origin of theological speculation. The philosophers of antiquity realized that man himself was the key to the riddle of life, for he was the living image of the Divine Plan, and in future ages humanity also will come to realize more fully the solemn import of those ancient words: "The proper study of mankind is man."

Both God and man have a twofold constitution, of which the superior part is invisible and the inferior visible. In both there is also an intermediary sphere, marking the point where these visible and invisible natures meet. As the spiritual nature of God controls His objective universal form--which is actually a crystallized idea--so the spiritual nature of man is the invisible cause and controlling power of his visible material personality. Thus it is evident that the spirit of man bears the same relationship to his material body that God bears to the objective universe. The Mysteries taught that spirit, or life, was anterior to form and that what is anterior includes all that is posterior to itself. Spirit being anterior to form, form is therefore included within the realm of spirit. It is also a popular statement or belief that man's spirit is within his body. According to the conclusions of philosophy and theology, however, this belief is erroneous, for spirit first circumscribes an area and then manifests within it. Philosophically speaking, form, being a part of spirit, is within spirit; but: spirit is more than the sum of form, As the material nature of man is therefore within the sum of spirit, so the Universal Nature, including the entire sidereal system, is within the all-pervading essence of God--the Universal Spirit.

According to another concept of the ancient wisdom, all bodies--whether spiritual or material--have three centers, called by the Greeks the *upper* center, the *middle* center, and the *lower* center. An apparent ambiguity will here be noted. To diagram or symbolize adequately abstract mental verities is impossible, for the diagrammatic representation of one aspect of metaphysical relationships may be an actual contradiction of some other aspect. While that which



THE TETRAGRAMMATON IN THE HUMAN HEART.

From Böhme's *Libri Apologetici*.

The Tetragrammaton, or four-lettered Name of God, is here arranged as a tetractys within the inverted human heart. Beneath, the name *Jehovah* is shown transformed into *Jehoshua* by the interpolation of the radiant Hebrew letter  $\aleph$ , *Shin*. The drawing as a whole represents the throne of God and His hierarchies

within the heart of man. In the first book of his *Libri Apologetici*, Jakob Böhme thus describes the meaning of the symbol: "For we men have one book in common which points to God. Each has it within himself, which is the priceless Name of God. Its letters are the flames of His love, which He out of His heart in the priceless Name of Jesus has revealed in us. Read these letters in your hearts and spirits and you have books enough. All the writings of the children of God direct you unto that one book, for therein lie all the treasures of wisdom. \* \* \* This book is Christ in you."

is above is generally considered superior in dignity and power, in reality that which is in the center is superior and anterior to both that which is said to be above and that which is said to be below. Therefore, it must be said that the first--which is considered as being above--is actually in the center, while both of the others (which are said to be either above or below) are actually beneath. This point can be further simplified if the reader will consider *above* as indicating degree of proximity to source and *below* as indicating degree of distance from source, source being posited in the actual center and relative distance being the various points along the radii from the center toward the circumference. In matters pertaining to philosophy and theology, *up* may be considered as toward the center and *down* as toward the circumference. Center is spirit; circumference is matter. Therefore, *up* is toward spirit along an ascending scale of spirituality; *down* is toward matter along an ascending scale of materiality. The latter concept is partly expressed by the apex of a cone which, when viewed from above, is seen as a point in the exact center of the circumference formed by the base of the cone.

These three universal centers--the one above, the one below, and the link uniting them--represent three suns or three aspects of one sun--centers of effulgence. These also have their analogues in the three grand centers of the human body, which, like the physical universe, is a Demiurgic fabrication. "The first of these [suns]," says Thomas Taylor, "is analogous to light when viewed subsisting in its fountain the sun; the second to the light immediately proceeding from the sun; and the third to the splendour communicated to other natures by this light."

Since the superior (or spiritual) center is in the midst of the other two, its analogue in the physical body is the heart--the most spiritual and mysterious organ in the human body. The second center (or the link between the superior and inferior worlds) is elevated to the position of greatest physical dignity--the brain. The third (or lower) center is relegated to the position of least physical dignity but greatest physical



importance--the generative system. Thus the heart is symbolically the source of life; the brain the link by which, through rational intelligence, life and form are united; and the generative system--or infernal creator--the source of that power by which physical organisms are produced. The ideals and aspirations of the individual depend largely upon which of these three centers of power predominates in scope and activity of expression. In the materialist the lower center is the strongest, in the intellectualist the higher center; but in the initiate the middle center--by bathing the two extremes in a flood of spiritual effulgence--controls wholesomely both the mind and the body.

As light bears witness of life--which is its source--so the mind bears witness of the spirit, and activity in a still lower plane bears witness of intelligence. Thus the mind bears witness of the heart, while the generative system, in turn, bears witness of the mind. Accordingly, the spiritual nature is most commonly symbolized by a heart; the intellectual power by an opened eye, symbolizing the pineal gland or Cyclopean eye, which is the two-faced Janus of the pagan Mysteries; and the generative system by a flower, a staff, a cup, or a hand.

While all the Mysteries recognized the heart as the center of spiritual consciousness, they often purposely ignored this concept and used the heart in its exoteric sense as the symbol of the emotional nature. In this arrangement the generative center represented the physical body, the heart the emotional body, and the brain the mental body. The brain represented the superior sphere, but after the initiates had passed through the lower degrees they were instructed that the brain was the proxy of the spiritual flame dwelling in the innermost recesses of the heart. The student of esotericism discovers ere long that the ancients often resorted to various blinds to conceal the true interpretations of their Mysteries. The substitution of the brain for the heart was one of these blinds.

The three degrees of the ancient Mysteries were, with few exceptions, given in chambers which represented the three great centers of the human and Universal bodies. If possible, the temple itself was constructed in the form of the human body. The candidate entered between the feet and received the highest degree in the point corresponding to the brain. Thus the first degree was the material mystery and its symbol was the generative system; it raised the candidate through the various degrees of concrete thought. The second degree was given in the chamber corresponding to the heart, but represented the middle power which was the mental link. Here the

candidate was initiated into the mysteries of abstract thought and lifted as high as the mind was capable of penetrating. He then passed into the third chamber, which, analogous to the brain, occupied the highest position in the temple but, analogous to the heart, was of the greatest dignity. In the brain chamber the heart mystery was given. Here the initiate for the first time truly comprehended the meaning of those immortal words: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." As there are seven hearts in the brain so there are seven brains in the heart, but this is a matter of superphysics of which little can be said at the present time.

Proclus writes on this subject in the first book of *On the Theology of Plato*: "Indeed, Socrates in the (First) Alcibiades rightly observes, that the soul entering into herself will behold all other things, and deity itself. For verging to her own union, and to the centre of all life, laying aside multitude, and the variety of the all manifold powers which she contains, she ascends to the highest watch-tower offerings. And as in the most holy of the mysteries, they say, that the mystics at first meet with the multi form, and many-shaped genera, which are hurled forth before the gods, but on entering the temple, unmoved, and guarded by the mystic rites, they genuinely receive in their bosom [heart] divine illumination, and divested of their garments, as they would say, participate of a divine nature; the same mode, as it appears to me, takes place in the speculation of wholes. For the soul when looking at things posterior to herself, beholds the shadows and images of beings, but when she converts herself to herself she evolves her own essence, and the reasons which she contains. And at first indeed, she only as it were beholds herself; but, when she penetrates more profoundly into the knowledge of herself, she finds in herself both intellect, and the orders of beings. When however, she proceeds into her interior recesses, and into the adytum as it were of the soul, she perceives with her eye closed [without the aid of the lower mind], the genus of the gods, and the unities of beings. For all things are in us psychically, and through this we are naturally capable of knowing all things, by exciting the powers and the images of wholes which we contain."

The initiates of old warned their disciples that an image is not a reality but merely the objectification of a subjective idea. The image, of the gods were nor designed to be objects of worship but were to be regarded merely as emblems or reminders of invisible powers and principles. Similarly, the body of man must not be considered as the individual but only as the house of the individual, in the same manner

that the temple was the House of God. In a state of grossness and perversion man's body is the tomb or prison of a divine



HAND DECORATED WITH EFFIGIES OF JESUS CHRIST, THE VIRGIN MARY, AND THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

From an old print, courtesy of Carl Oscar Borg.

Upon the twelve phalanges of the fingers, appear the likenesses of the Apostles, each bearing its own appropriate symbol. In the case of those who suffered martyrdom the symbol signifies the instrument of death. Thus, the symbol of St. Andrew is a cross; of St. Thomas, a javelin or a builder's square; of St. James the Less, a club; of St. Philip, a cross; of St. Bartholomew, a large knife or scimitar; of St. Matthew, a sword or spear (sometimes a purse); of St. Simon, a club or saw; of St. Matthias, an axe; and of St. Judas, a halbert. The Apostles whose symbols do not elate to their martyrdom are St. Peter, who carries two crossed keys, one gold and one silver; St. James the Great, who bears a pilgrim's staff and an escalop shell; and St. John, who holds a cup from which the poison miraculously departed in the form of a serpent. (See *Handbook of Christian Symbolism*.) The figure of Christ upon the second phalange of the thumb does not follow the pagan system of assigning the first Person of the Creative Triad to this Position. God the Father should occupy the second Phalange, God the Son the first phalange, while to God the Holy Spirit is assigned the base of the thumb.--Also, according to the Philosophic arrangement, the Virgin should occupy the base of the thumb, which is sacred to the moon.

principle; in a state of unfoldment and regeneration it is the House or Sanctuary of the Deity by whose creative powers it was fashioned. "Personality is suspended upon a thread from the nature of Being," declares the secret work. Man is essentially a permanent and immortal principle; only his bodies pass through the cycle of birth and death. The immortal is the reality; the mortal is the unreality. During each period of earth life, reality thus dwells in unreality, to be liberated from it temporarily by death and permanently by illumination.

While generally regarded as polytheists, the pagans gained this reputation not because they worshiped more than one God but rather because they personified the attributes of this God, thereby creating a pantheon of posterior deities each manifesting a part of what the One God manifested as a whole. The various pantheons of ancient religions therefore actually represent the catalogued and personified attributes of Deity. In this respect they correspond to the hierarchies of the Hebrew Qabbalists. All the gods and goddesses of antiquity consequently have their analogies in the human body, as have also the elements, planets, and constellations which were assigned as proper vehicles for these celestials. Four body centers are assigned to the elements, the seven vital organs to the planets, the twelve principal parts and members to the zodiac, the invisible parts of man's divine nature to various supermundane deities, while the hidden God was declared to manifest through the marrow in the bones.

It is difficult for many to realize that they are actual universes; that their physical bodies are a visible nature through the structure of which countless waves of evolving life are unfolding their latent potentialities. Yet through man's physical body not only are a mineral, a plant, and an animal kingdom evolving, but also unknown classifications and divisions of invisible spiritual life. Just as cells are infinitesimal units in the structure of man, so man is an infinitesimal unit in the structure of the universe. A theology based upon the knowledge and appreciation of these relationships is as profoundly just as it is profoundly true.

As man's physical body has five distinct and important extremities--two legs, two arms, and a head, of which the last governs the first four--the number 5 has been accepted as the symbol of man. By its four corners the pyramid symbolizes the arms and legs, and by its apex the head, thus indicating that one rational power controls four irrational corners. The hands and feet are used to represent the four elements, of which the two feet are earth and water, and the two hands fire and air. The brain then symbolizes the sacred fifth element--æther--which controls and unites the other four. If the feet are placed together and the arms outspread, man then symbolizes the cross with the rational intellect as the head or upper limb.

The fingers and toes also have special significance. The toes represent the Ten Commandments of the physical law and the fingers the Ten Commandments of the spiritual law. The four fingers of each hand represent the four elements and the three phalanges of each finger represent the divisions of the element, so that in each hand there are

twelve parts to the fingers, which are analogous to the signs of the zodiac, whereas the two phalanges and base of each thumb signify the threefold Deity. The first phalange corresponds to the creative aspect, the second to the preservative aspect, and the base to the generative and destructive aspect. When the hands are brought together, the result is the twenty-four Elders and the six Days of Creation.

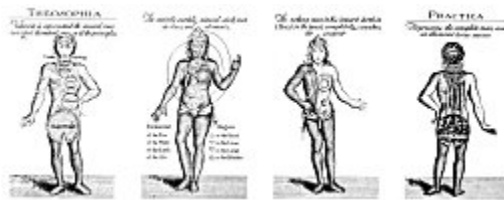
In symbolism the body is divided vertically into halves, the right half being considered as light and the left half as darkness. By those unacquainted with the true meanings of light and darkness the light half was denominated spiritual and the left half material. Light is the symbol of objectivity; darkness of subjectivity. Light is a manifestation of life and is therefore posterior to life. That which is anterior to light is darkness, in which light exists temporarily but darkness permanently. As life precedes light, its only symbol is darkness, and darkness is considered as the veil which must eternally conceal the true nature of abstract and undifferentiated Being.

In ancient times men fought with their right arms and defended the vital centers with their left arms, on which was carried the protecting shield. The right half of the body was regarded therefore as offensive and the left half defensive. For this reason also the right side of the body was considered masculine and the left side feminine. Several authorities are of the opinion that the present prevalent right-handedness of the race is the outgrowth of the custom of holding the left hand in restraint for defensive purposes. Furthermore, as the source of Being is in the primal darkness which preceded light, so the spiritual nature of man is in the dark part of his being, for the heart is on the left side.

Among the curious misconceptions arising from the false practice of associating darkness with evil is one by which several early nations used the right hand for all constructive labors and the left hand for only those purposes termed unclean and unfit for the sight of the gods. For the same reason black magic was often referred to as the left-hand path, and heaven was said to be upon the right and hell upon the left. Some philosophers further declared that there were two methods of writing; one from left to right, which was considered the exoteric method; the other from right to left, which was considered esoteric. The exoteric writing was that which was done out or away from the heart, while the esoteric writing was that which--like the ancient Hebrew--was written toward the heart.

The secret doctrine declares that every part and member of the body is epitomized in the brain and, in turn, that all that is in the brain is epitomized in the heart. In symbolism the human head is frequently used to represent intelligence and self-knowledge. As the human body in its entirety is the most perfect known product of the earth's evolution, it was employed to represent Divinity--the highest appreciable state or condition. Artists, attempting to portray Divinity, often show only a hand emerging from an impenetrable cloud. The cloud signifies the Unknowable Divinity concealed from man by human limitation. The hand signifies the Divine activity, the only part of God which is cognizable to the lower senses.

The face consists of a natural trinity: the eyes representing the spiritual power which comprehends; the nostrils representing the preservative and vivifying power; and the mouth and ears representing the material Demiurgic power of the lower world. The first sphere is eternally existent and is creative; the second sphere pertains to the mystery of the creative breach; and the third sphere



THE THREEFOLD LIFE OF THE INNER MAN.

Redrawn from Gichtel's *Theosophia Practica*.

Johann Georg Gichtel, a profound Philosopher and mystic, the most illumined of the disciples of Jakob Böhme, secretly circulated the above diagrams among a small group of devoted friends and students. Gichtel republished the writings of Böhme, illustrating them with numerous remarkable figures. According to Gichtel, the diagrams above, represent the anatomy of the divine (or inner) man, and graphically set forth its condition during its human, infernal, and divine states. The plates in the William Law edition of Böhme's works are based apparently upon Gichtel's diagrams, which they follow in all essentials. Gichtel gives no detailed description of his figures, and the lettering on the original diagrams here translated out of the German is the only clue to the interpretation of the charts.

The two end figures represent the obverse and reverse of the same diagram and are termed Table Three. They are "designed to show the Condition of the whole Man, as to all his three essential Parts, Spirit, Soul, and Body, in his Regenerated State." The third figure from the left is called the Second Table, and sets forth "the Condition of Man in his old, lapsed, and corrupted State; without any respect to, or consideration of his renewing by regeneration." The third figure, however, does not correspond with the First Table of William Law. The First Table presumably represents the condition of humanity before the Fall, but the Gichtel plate pertains to the third, or regenerated, state of mankind. William Law thus describes the purpose of the diagrams, and the symbols upon them: "These three tables are designed to represent Man in his different Threefold State: the First before his Fall, in Purity, Dominion, and Glory: the Second after his Fall, in Pollution and Perdition: and the Third in his rising from the Fall, or on the Way of regeneration, in Sanctification and Tendency to his last Perfection." The student of Orientalism will immediately recognize in the symbols upon the figures the Hindu *chakras*, or centers of spiritual force, the various motions and aspects of which reveal the condition of the disciple's internal divine nature.

to the creative word. By the Word of God the material universe was fabricated, and the seven creative powers, or vowel sounds--which had been brought into existence by the speaking of the Word--became the seven Elohim or Deities by whose power and ministration the lower world was organized. Occasionally the Deity is symbolized by an eye, an ear, a nose, or a mouth. By the first, Divine awareness is signified; by the second, Divine interest; by the third, Divine vitality; and by the fourth, Divine command.

The ancients did not believe that spirituality made men either righteous or rational, but rather that righteousness and rationality made men spiritual. The Mysteries taught that spiritual illumination was attained only by bringing the lower nature up to a certain standard of efficiency and purity. The Mysteries were therefore established for the purpose of unfolding the nature of man according to certain fixed rules which, when faithfully followed, elevated the human consciousness to a point where it was capable of cognizing its own constitution and the true purpose of existence. This knowledge of how man's manifold constitution could be most quickly and most completely regenerated to the point of spiritual illumination constituted the secret, or esoteric, doctrine of antiquity. Certain apparently physical organs and centers are in reality the veils or sheaths of spiritual centers. What these were and how they could be unfolded was never revealed to the unregenerate, for the philosophers realized that once he understands the complete working of any system, a man may accomplish a prescribed end without being qualified to manipulate and control the effects which he has produced. For this reason long periods of probation

were imposed, so that the knowledge of how to become as the gods might remain the sole possession of the worthy.

Lest that knowledge be lost, however, it was concealed in allegories and myths which were meaningless to the profane but self-evident to those acquainted with that theory of personal redemption which was the foundation of philosophical theology. Christianity itself may be cited as an example. The entire New Testament is in fact an ingeniously concealed exposition of the secret processes of human regeneration. The characters so long considered as historical men and women are really the personification of certain processes which take place in the human body when man begins the task of consciously liberating himself from the bondage of ignorance and death.

The garments and ornamentations supposedly worn by the gods are also keys, for in the Mysteries clothing was considered as synonymous with form. The degree of spirituality or materiality of the organisms was signified by the quality, beauty, and value of the garments worn. Man's physical body was looked upon as the robe of his spiritual nature; consequently, the more developed were his super-substantial powers the more glorious his apparel. Of course, clothing was originally worn for ornamentation rather than protection, and such practice still prevails among many primitive peoples. The Mysteries caught that man's only lasting adornments were his virtues and worthy characteristics; that he was clothed in his own accomplishments and adorned by his attainments. Thus the white robe was symbolic of purity, the red robe of sacrifice and love, and the blue robe of altruism and integrity. Since the body was said to be the robe of the spirit, mental or moral deformities were depicted as deformities of the body.

Considering man's body as the measuring rule of the universe, the philosophers declared that all things resemble in constitution--if not in form--the human body. The Greeks, for example, declared Delphi to be the navel of the earth, for the physical planet was looked upon as a gigantic human being twisted into the form of a ball. In contradistinction to the belief of Christendom that the earth is an inanimate thing, the pagans considered not only the earth but also all the sidereal bodies as individual creatures possessing individual intelligences. They even went so far as to view the various kingdoms of Nature as individual entities. The animal kingdom, for example, was looked upon as one being--a composite of all the creatures composing that kingdom. This prototypic beast was a mosaic embodiment of all animal propensities and within its nature the entire animal world



existed as the human species exists within the constitution of the prototypic Adam.

In the same manner, races, nations, tribes, religions, states, communities, and cities were viewed as composite entities, each made up of varying numbers of individual units. Every community has an individuality which is the sum of the individual attitudes of its inhabitants. Every religion is an individual whose body is made up of a hierarchy and vast host of individual worshipers. The organization of any religion represents its physical body, and its individual members the cell life making up this organism. Accordingly, religions, races, and communities--like individuals--pass through Shakespeare's *Seven Ages*, for the life of man is a standard by which the perpetuity of all things is estimated.

According to the secret doctrine, man, through the gradual refinement of his vehicles and the ever-increasing sensitiveness resulting from that refinement, is gradually overcoming the limitations of matter and is disentangling himself from his mortal coil. When humanity has completed its physical evolution, the empty shell of materiality left behind will be used by other life waves as steppingstones to their own liberation. The trend of man's evolutionary growth is ever toward his own essential Selfhood. At the point of deepest materialism, therefore, man is at the greatest distance from Himself. According to the Mystery teachings, not all the spiritual nature of man incarnates in matter. The spirit of man is diagrammatically shown as an equilateral triangle with one point downward. This lower point, which is one-third of the spiritual nature but in comparison to the dignity of the other two is much less than a third, descends into the illusion of material existence for a brief space of time. That which never clothes itself in the sheath of matter is the Hermetic *Anthropos*--the Overman-- analogous to the Cyclops or guardian *dæmon* of the Greeks, the *angel* of Jakob Böhme, and the Oversoul of Emerson, "that Unity, that Oversoul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other."

At birth only a third part of the Divine Nature of man temporarily dissociates itself from its own immortality and takes upon itself the dream of physical birth and existence, animating with its own celestial enthusiasm a vehicle composed of material elements, part of and bound to the material sphere. At death this incarnated part awakens from the dream of physical existence and reunites itself once more with its eternal condition. This periodical descent of spirit into matter is termed the *wheel of life and death*, and the principles involved are treated at

length by the philosophers under the subject of metempsychosis. By initiation into the Mysteries and a certain process known as operative theology, this law of birth and death is transcended, and during the course of physical existence that part of the spirit which is asleep in form is awakened without the intervention of death--the inevitable Initiator--and is consciously reunited with the *Anthropos*, or the overshadowing substance of itself. This is at once the primary purpose and the consummate achievement of the Mysteries: that man shall become aware of and consciously be reunited with the divine source of himself without tasting of physical dissolution.



THE DIVINE TREE IN MAN  
(reverse)

From Law's *Figures* of Jakob Böhme.

Just as the diagram representing the front view of man illustrates his divine principles in their regenerated state, so the back view of the same figure sets forth the inferior, or "night," condition of the sun. From the Sphere of the Astral Mind a line ascends through the Sphere of reason into that of the Senses. The Sphere of the Astral Mind and of the Senses are filled with stars to signify the nocturnal condition of their natures. In the sphere of reason, the superior and the inferior are reconciled, Reason in the mortal man corresponding to Illumined Understanding in the spiritual man.



THE DIVINE TREE IN MAN  
(obverse)

From Law's *Figures* of Jakob Böhme.

A tree with its roots in the heart rises from the Mirror of the Deity through the Sphere of the Understanding to branch forth in the Sphere of the Senses. The roots and trunk of this tree represent the divine nature of man and may be called his *spirituality*; the branches of the tree are the separate parts of the divine constitution and may be likened to the individuality; and the leaves--because of their ephemeral nature--correspond to the *personality*, which partakes of none of the permanence of its divine source.

# The Voice of the Prophets:

Wisdom of the Ages, Volume 5 of 12

Compiled By Marilynn Hughes

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*Photo by Harvey Kushner*

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## Wisdom of the Egyptians

*The Wisdom of the Egyptian, The Story of the Egyptians, the Religion of the Ancient Egyptians, the Ptah-Hotep and the Ke'gemini, the "Book of the Dead," the Wisdom of Hermes Trismegistus, Egyptian Magic, the Book of Thoth, Edited, and with an Introduction, By Brian Brown, New York: Brentano's, [1923]*

## The Emerald Tablet of Hermes

*Emerald Tablet of Hermes, History of the Tablet, History of the Tablet (largely summarised from Needham 1980, & Holmyard 1957) The Tablet probably first appeared in the West in editions of the psuedo-Aristotlean Secretum Secretorum which was actually a translation of the Kitab Sirr al-Asar, a book of advice to kings which was translated into latin by Johannes Hispalensis c. 1140 and by Philip of Tripoli c.1243. Other translations of the Tablet may have been made during the same period by Plato of Tivoli and Hugh of Santalla, perhaps from different sources. The date of the Kitab Sirr al-Asar is uncertain, though c.800 has been suggested and it is not clear when the tablet became part of this work.*

## Corpus Hermeticum

*The Corpus Hermeticum, the core documents of the Hermetic tradition. Dating from early in the Christian era, they were mistakenly dated to a much earlier period by Church officials (and everyone else) up until the 15th century. Because of this, they were allowed to survive and*

*we seen as an early precursor to what was to be Christianity. We know today that they were, in fact, from the early Christian era, and came out of the turbulent religious seas of Hellenic Egypt. These are all taken from Mead's translations.*

## The Divine Pymander of Hermes

*Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus, Translation by John Everard, [1650]*

## 'The Secret Teachings of All Ages'

*The Secret Teachings of All Ages, By Manly P. Hall,  
Philosophical Publishing Society, 1928*

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