CONTRIBUTORS

Harold W. Attridge
Hans-Gebhard Bethge
Alexander Böhlig
James Brashler
Roger A. Bullard
Peter A. Dirkse
Joseph A. Gibbons
Søren Giversen
Charles W. Hedrick
Wesley W. Isenberg
Helmut Koester
Thomas O. Lambdin
Bentley Layton
George W. MacRae
Dieter Mueller†
William R. Murdock
Elaine H. Pagels
Douglas M. Parrott
Birger A. Pearson
Malcolm L. Peel
James M. Robinson
William C. Robinson, Jr.
William R. Schoedel
John H. Sieber
John D. Turner
Francis E. Williams
R. McL. Wilson
Orval S. Wintemute
Antoinette Clark Wire
Frederik Wisse
Jan Zandee

Marvin W. Meyer, Managing Editor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface .................................................. IX

MARVIN W. MEYER

Table of Tractates in the Nag Hammadi Library .......... xiii

Textual Signs ........................................... xvi

Introduction ........................................... 1

JAMES M. ROBINSON

The Prayer of the Apostle Paul (I, 1) ................. 27

DIETER MUELLER

The Apocryphon of James (I, 2) ....................... 29

FRANCIS E. WILLIAMS and DIETER MUELLER

The Gospel of Truth (I, 3 and XII, 2) .............. 37

GEORGE W. MACRAE

The Treatise on Resurrection (I, 4) ................. 50

MALCOLM L. PEEL

The Tripartite Tractate (I, 5) ....................... 54

HAROLD W. ATTRIDGE, ELAINE H. PAGELS, and DIETER MUELLER

The Apocryphon of John (II, I, III, I, IV, I, and BG 8502, 2) ........... 98

FREDERIK WISSE

The Gospel of Thomas (II, 2) ....................... 117

HELMT KOESTER and THOMAS O. LAMBDIN

The Gospel of Philip (II, 3) ....................... 131

WESLEY W. ISENBERG

The Hypostasis of the Archons (II, 4) ............ 152

ROGER A. BULLARD and BENTLEY LAYTON

On the Origin of the World (II, 5 and XIII, 2) .... 161

HANS-GBEBHARD BETHGE and ORVAL S. WINTEMUTE

The Exegesis on the Soul (II, 6) ................... 180

WILLIAM C. ROBINSON, Jr.

The Book of Thomas the Contender (II, 7) .......... 188

JOHN D. TURNER

The Gospel of the Egyptians (III, 2 and IV, 2) .... 195

ALEXANDER BÖHLIG and FREDERIK WISSE
TEXTUAL SIGNS

Small strokes above the line indicate line divisions. Every fifth line a small number is inserted in place of the stroke; the frequency of these numbers, however, may vary in tractates which are quite fragmentary. A new page is indicated with a number in bold type. When the beginning of a new line or page coincides with the opening of a paragraph, the line divider or number is placed at the end of the previous paragraph.

[] Square brackets indicate a lacuna in the manuscript. When the text cannot be reconstructed, three dots are placed within the brackets, regardless of the size of the lacuna; a fourth dot, if appropriate, may function as a period. An exception to this rule is the occasional use of a different number of dots to estimate the extent of the missing portion of a proper noun. In a few instances the dots are used without brackets to indicate a series of Coptic letters which do not constitute a translatable sense unit. A bracket is not allowed to divide a word, except for a hyphenated word or a proper noun. Other words are placed entirely inside or outside the brackets, depending on the certainty of the Coptic word and the number of Coptic letters visible.

<> Pointed brackets indicate a correction of a scribal omission or error. The translator has either inserted letters unintentionally omitted by the scribe, or replaced letters erroneously inserted with what the scribe presumably intended to write.

{} Braces indicate superfluous letters or words added by the scribe.

() Parentheses indicate material supplied by the editor or translator. Although this material may not directly reflect the text being translated, it provides useful information for the reader.

INTRODUCTION

by

JAMES M. ROBINSON

1. The Stance of the Texts

The Nag Hammadi library is a collection of religious texts that vary widely from each other as to when, where, and by whom they were written. Even the points of view diverge to such an extent that the texts are not to be thought of as coming from one group or movement. Yet these diversified materials must have had something in common which caused them to be chosen by those who collected them. The collectors no doubt contributed to this unity by finding in the texts hidden meanings not fully intended by the original authors. After all, one of them, the Gospel of Thomas, begins with a word to the wise: “Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not experience death.” Thus the texts can be read at two levels: what the original author may have intended to communicate and what the texts may subsequently have been taken to communicate.

The focus that brought the collection together is an estrangement from the mass of humanity, an affinity to an ideal order that completely transcends life as we know it, and a life-style radically other than common practice. This life-style involved giving up all the goods that people usually desire and longing for an ultimate liberation. It is not an aggressive revolution that is intended, but rather a withdrawal from involvement in the contamination that destroys clarity of vision.

As such, the focus of this library has much in common with primitive Christianity, with eastern religions, and with holy men of all times, as well as with the more secular equivalents of today, such as the counterculture movements coming from the 1960’s. Disinterest in the goods of a consumer society, withdrawal into communes of the like-minded away from the bustle and clutter of big-city distraction, non-involvement in the compromises of the political process, sharing an in-group’s knowledge both of the disaster-course of the culture and of an ideal, radical alternative not commonly known—all this in modern garb is the real challenge rooted in such materials as the Nag Hammadi library.
[twelve] ' judge [...] them [...] the fountain of [...] [immortality ...] 13 in order that [...] 17 good [...] the whole place. [...] there the enemies. 20 He was baptized, and the [...] he became divine; he flew ' [up], (and) they did not grasp him. [...] there the [enemies [...] since it was not possible 86 [for them to bring him] down again. ' Every [...] grasps him ' [with] ignorance, attending ' to those who teach in the corners ' by means of carved things and 30 artful tricks. They will not be able [...] .

MARSANES (X, I)

Introduced and translated by
BIRGER A. PEARSON

Codex X, one of the most fragmentary of the Nag Hammadi codices, apparently consists of a single tractate whose title occurs at the end: "[M]arsanes". This tractate is an apocalypse attributed to a Gnostic prophet and visionary known from other Gnostic sources (under the name "Marsanes" and "Marsianos"). It may have been among the Gnostic apocalypses which, according to Porphyry, were discussed in Rome in the school of Plotinus.

Marsanes begins and ends with an encouraging statement on the rewards of knowledge. Though it is impossible to determine the full content of the tractate, some conclusions can be reached about the content of the best-preserved pages (1-10, 25-42). Pages 1-10 describe an intellectual and visionary ascent to the highest heaven; here the various levels of reality are revealed. The readers are given to understand that they, too, can achieve the ascent to God. The vocabulary of this section is closely related to that of Allogenesis (XI, 3). Pages 25-42 contain revelations concerning the mystical meaning of the letters of the alphabet: their relation to the human soul on the one hand, and to the names of the angels on the other. The closest parallel to this material from previously known Gnostic sources is Irenaeus' description of the teachings of Marcus.

The content and vocabulary of Marsanes show interesting points of contact with Neoplatonic philosophy, revealing a distinct trend away from the radical dualism of the earliest Gnostic systems in the direction of a monistic understanding of reality. Marsanes was composed originally in Greek, perhaps by a Syrian author, probably in the early third century.

MARSANES

X 1, 1-68, 18

[...] 11 and a [reward]. They [came to know]; they ' found him with a pure heart, ' and they are not afflicted by him ' with evils. Those who have received 15 you (pl.) will be given their ' choice reward for ' endurance, and he will ' ward off [the] ' evils from them. [But] let none 20 of us be distressed [and] ' think [in] his ' heart that the great ' Father [...] . ' For he looks upon the All [and] 86 takes care of them all. ' And [he] has shown to them ' his [...] . ' Those that [...] 211 at first. ' But as for the thirteenth ' seal, I have established it, ' together with [the] limit of 15 knowledge and the certainty ' of rest. The first ' [and the] second and the ' [third] are the cosmic ' and the material. I have 20 [in-
formed] you concerning these, that you should [ ... ] your bodies. And [a] sense-perceptible [power] [will] [ ... ] those who will rest, [and] they will be kept [ ... ] from [passion] and division [of] the union.

The fourth [and the] fifth which are above, [these] you have come to know [ ... ] divine. 3 He exists after the [ ... ] and the nature of the [ ... ] that is, the one who [ ... ] three. And [I have 8 informed] you of [ ... ] in the three [ ... ] by these [two. I have 'informed] you concerning [ ... ] is incorporeal [ ... ] and after [ ... ] within [ ... ] every [ ... ] which [ ... ] your [ ... ]. The [fifth, 15 concerning] the repentance [of] those that are within me, and [concerning] those who dwell in that place.

But the sixth, concerning the self-begotten ones, 20 concerning the incorporeal being [which exists] partially, [together] with those who exist in [the] truth of the All [ ... ] for understanding and [as] assurance. And the [seventh], concerning the self-begotten power, [which is the] third [perfect ...] 4 fourth, concerning salvation [and] wisdom. And the eighth, concerning the mind which is [male, which] appeared 5 [in the beginning], and (concerning) the being [which is incorporeal] and the [intelligible] world. The ninth, [ ... ] of the power [which] appeared [in the 10 beginning. The] tenth, concerning Barbelo, the virgin [ ... ] of the Aeon. [The eleventh] and [the] twelfth] speak of the Invisible One who possesses three powers and the Spirit which does not have being, belonging to the first Unbegotten (fem.). The 20 thirteenth speaks concerning [the] Silent One who was not [known], and the primacy of [the one who] was not distinguished.

For I am he who has 28 understood that which truly exists, [whether] partially or [wholly], according to difference [and] sameness, that they exist from the [beginning in the] entire place which is eternal, (i.e.) all those that have come into existence whether being or with being, those who are unbegotten, and the divine aeons 5 together with the angels, and the souls which are without guile, and the soul-garments, the likenesses of [the] simple ones. And [afterwards] they 10 have been mixed with [those that resemble] them. But still [ ... ] the entire being [ ... which] imitates the incorporeal being [and] the unsubstantial (fem.). [Finally] 15 the entire defilement [was saved] together with the immortality of [that one (fem.). I have deliberated] and have attained to the boundary of the sense-perceptible 5 world, [ ... have come to know] part by part 20 the entire place of the incorporeal being, and [ ... ] have come to know the intelligible world. [I have come to know], when [ ... ] was deliberating, [that in every respect the sense-perceptible] 25 world is [worthy] of being saved entirely.

[For] 7 I have not ceased speaking [of the] Self-begotten One, O [ ... ] became [ ... ] part by part the entire place. [He descended; again] he descended from the Unbegotten One who does not have being, who 5 is the Spirit. That one who exists before all of them attains [to the divine] Self-engendered One. [The one having] [being] searches 10 [ ... ] and he exists [ ... and] he is like [ ... ] and from [ ... ] dividing [ ... ] I became [ ... ] for many, as it is manifest [that he saved a multitude].

But after all these things I am seeking the kingdom of the Three-Powered, 20 which has no beginning. Whence did he appear and act to fill the entire place with his power? And in what way did the unbegotten ones 28 come into existence, since they were not begotten? And what are [the] differences among [the] aeons? [And] as for those who are unbegotten, how many [are they]? And in what respect [do they differ] from each other? 7

When I had inquired about these things I perceived that he had worked from silence. He exists from the beginning among those that 6 truly exist, that belong to the One who exists. There is another, existing from the beginning, belonging to the One who works within the Silent One. And the silence [ ... ] him works, for this [ ... ] is [a] brother. That one [works from] the silence which belongs to the Unbegotten One among [the] aeons, and from 15 the beginning he does not have [being]. But the energy of that One [is] the Three-Powered One, [the] Unbegotten [before] the Aeon, not having [being]. 30 And it is possible to behold the supremacy of the silence of the Silent One, [ ... ] i.e. the supremacy of the energy of the Three-Powered. And the One who 25 exists, who is silent, [who is] above the [heaven ...], revealed [the] Three-Powered, First-Perfect One.

[When he ... 8 the powers they rejoiced. Those that are within me were perfected together with all the rest. And they all blessed 5 the Three-Powered, one by one, who is [the] First-Perfect One, [blessing] him in purity, [everywhere] praising the Lord 10 [who exists] before the All, [ ... the] Three-Powered. [ ... ] their worship [ ... ] myself, [and I will still go on inquiring] how they had [become silent]. I will understand a power which I hold in honor.

The third 2 of the Three-Powered, 20 when it had perceived him, said to me, "Be silent in order that you might [not] know; run, and come before me. But know that this One was 25 silent, and obtain understanding." For [the power] is attending [to me, leading] me into [the Aeon which is] Barbelo, [the] male [Virgin]. 9
For this reason the 'Virgin became male,' because she had been divided from the male. The 'Knowledge stood outside of him,' because it belongs to him. And she who exists, she who sought, possesses (it), just as the Three-Powered One possesses. She withdrew 10 from them, from these two [powers], since she exists [outside of] the Great One, as she [ . . . ] who is above [ . . . ] who is silent, [who has]18 this [commandment] to be silent. His knowledge 'and his hypostasis 'and his energy 'are those things of which the power 30 of the Three-Powered spoke, (saying), 'We all have 'withdrawn to ourselves. We have [become] 'silent, [and] 'when we came to know [him, that is,25 the Three-Powered, we] 'bowed down; we [ . . . ; we] 'blessed him [ . . . ] upon us. [ . . . ].'  

[ . . . the] invisible [Spirit] 10 ran up 'to his place. The whole place 'was revealed; the whole place unfolded 'until he reached the upper region.3 Again he departed; he caused the 'whole place to be illuminated, and the whole 'place was illuminated. And [you] (pl.) have been given the third part of 'the spirit of the power of the One 10 [who possesses] the three 'powers. Blessed is ' . . . He said, O [you] 'who dwell in these] places, it is necessary 'for you to know] those that are higher 18 than these, and tell them to the 'powers. For you (sing.) will become 'elect with the elect ones 'in the last times, 'as the invisible Spirit 30 [runs] up above. And you 'yourselves, run with him 'up above, since you have 'the great crown which ' . . .

But on the day 28 [ . . . ] will beckon [ . . . ] run up above [ . . . ] and the sense-perceptible ' . . . visible ' . . . and they [ . . . ] (pp. 11-12 missing) 13-15 the perception. He is for 'ever, not having being, 'in the One who is, who is silent, 'the One who is from the beginning, 'who does [not] have being 30 [ . . . ] part of ' . . . indivisible. The ' . . . consider a [ . . . 24 ninth . . . ] 14-15 I was dwelling 'among the aeons which have 'been begotten. As I was permitted, I [have] 'come to be among those that were not [begotten]. But I was dwelling in the [great] 30 Aeons, as I [ . . . ] 'And [ . . . ] the three powers [ . . . ] the One who [possesses] the [three] powers. The three [powers 15 the] Silent One and the 'Three-Powered One . . . the one that does not have breath. 'We took our stand [ . . . ] 5 in the [ . . . ] 18 we entered [ . . . ] breath [ . . . 16 who] does not have breath, ' [and he] exists in a [ . . . ] 'completely. And I saw ' . . . him to the great 5 [ . . . ] they knew him [ . . . ] 18 limit [ . . . ] 'and [ . . . ] alone [ . . . ] 17 is active 'why, [again], (does) knowledge ' . . . ignorant, and [ . . . ] 'he runs the risk 6 [ . . . ] that he become [ . . . ]. Those ' . . . But it is necessary that a ' . . . does not have form ' . . .


But in addition, when 20 14 hidden [ . . . ] 'the third [ . . . power. The blessed Authority (fem.) 'said [ . . . ] 'among these and [ . . . ] 'i.e. she who [does not have] . . . 20 For there is not glory [ . . . ] nor even the one who [ . . . ] 'For indeed the one who [ . . . ] 24 For [ . . . ] 21 and the [ . . . ] the signs of the Zodiac . . . 'and the [ . . . ] 'and [ . . . ] 'which do not have [ . . . ] acquire for [ . . . ] 'revolution . . . '20 But [the] soul(s) [ . . . ] 'there [ . . . ] 'body(s) of this [ . . . ] soul(s) of heaven [ . . . ] 'around [ . . . ] 30 shape [ . . . ] 'which is [ . . . ] 22-12 those that [ . . . ] 'there [ . . . ] 'all the likenesses . . . 'thems [ . . . ] 'all the forms [ . . . ] 'shape(s), so that [they . . . and] become [ . . . ] 'themselves [ . . . ] 25 and the [ . . . ] 'the animals [ . . . ] 'and the [ . . . ] (pp. 23-24 missing) 25 there.

But their 'powers, which are the angels, 'are in the form of 'beasts and animals.8 Some among them are 'polymorphous, and contrary to 'nature they have [ . . . ] for their names which [ . . . ]. 'They are [divided] and [ . . . ] 16 according to the [ . . . ] 'and [ . . . ] in [form . . . ]. 'But these that are 'patterns of sound according to the third 'originate from being.16 And concerning these, all of these (remarks) are sufficient, 'since we have (already) spoken about them.

For [this] 'division takes place 'again in these regions in [the manner] 30 we have mentioned from the [beginning]. 'However the soul, on the 'other hand, [has] 'different shape(s). 'The shape of the soul exists [in 25 this] form, 'i.e. (the soul) that came into existence of its own accord. The shape 'is [the second] 26 spherical portion 'while the first follows [it], 'eëiou, the self-begotten soul, 'aëtiou.8 'The second schema, 'ëiou, (consists) of those [having] 'two sounds (diphthongs), the first being 'placed after them [ . . . ] 19 the light.

[Restrain] 'yourselves, receive [the] 'imperishable seed,15 bear fruit, and 'do not become 'attached to your possessions.

But know that the oxytones 'exist among the vowels 30 and the 'diphthongs which are 'next to them. But the [short] 'are inferior, and the [ . . . ] 'are [ . . . ] 25 by them. Those that [ . . . ] 'since they are inter-
mediate ' [...]. The sounds of ' [the semivowels] are 27 superior to those that do not have voice. ' And those that are double are superior ' to the semivowels which ' do not change. But the aspirates 8 are better than the inaspirates (of) ' these do not have voice. ' And those that are intermediate will [accept] ' their combination in which they are. ' They are ignorant [of] 10 the things that are good. They ' are combined with the [intermediates] ' which are less, according to (the) [form] ' of the nomenclature of the [gods] ' and the angels, [not] because 15 they are mixed with each other ' form by form, but ' only (because) they have their ' good works. ' It did not happen 20 that their will was revealed. ' Do not keep on [sining], ' and do not dare to ' make use of sin.

But [I] 1 am speaking to you [concerning the ' three ... shapes] ' of the soul. [The] ' third [shape of the soul] ' is [... 28] a spherical one, put ' after it, from those that have a ' single vowel: ' eee, iii, ooo, uuu, ððð. The diphthongs were ' as follows: ai, au, ' ei, eu, ðu, ðu, oi, ' ei, ' ui, ði, aue, euou, ' ðgg, ðgg, ðgg, aiau, ' ðieu, ðiu, ðiu, ðiu, ' ðgg, ' ðgg, aueiu, aoeiu, ðiu, ' three times for a male soul. ' The third ' shape is spherical. 15 The second shape, being ' put after it, has ' two sounds. The male soul's ' third shape (consists) of the 20 simple vowels: ' aaaa, eeee, iii, ooo, ' uuu, ððð, ððð, ððð. ' [And] this shape is different ' [from] the first, but 30 [they resemble] each other ' [and they] make some ' [ordinary sounds] of ' [this sort: æææ]o. And 29 from these (are) made the diphthongs.

So also the ' fourth and the fifth. ' With regard to them, they were not allowed to 5 reveal the whole topic, ' but only those things that are apparent. ' You (pl.) were taught ' about them, that you should perceive ' in order that they, too, might 20 all seek and find [who] ' they are, either ' by themselves alone [...] ' or by each other, ' or to reveal [destinies] 15 that have been determined from the beginning, ' either with reference to themselves alone [or] ' with reference to one another, just as [they] ' exist with each other [in] ' sound, whether partially 20 or formally.

[They are] ' commanded [to] ' submit or their ' [part] is generated ' and [formal]. Either (they are commanded) by [the 25 long] (vowels) or [by] ' those of [dual time value, or] ' by [...] 30 which are short [...] 30 or the oxytons or the ' intermediates or the baytons.

And (the) consonants ' exist with the vowels, 9 and individually ' they are commanded, ' and they submit. ' They constitute the naming ' [of] the angels. And 10 (the) consonants are ' self-existent, ' [and] as they are changed ' (they) submit ' to the hidden 16 gods by means of ' beat and ' pitch and ' silence and impulse. ' [They] summon the semivowels, 20 all of which ' submit to them with ' one [accord]; since it is only ' the [unchanging] double (consonants) ' that coexist with the semivowels. 20

But the aspirates ' [and the inaspirates] and the ' [intermediates] coexist ' [with those that have] ' voice. [Again ' they] are combined ' [with each other, and] they are separate 31 from one another. They ' are commanded, and they submit, ' and they constitute an ' ignorant nomenclature. 5 And they become one [or] ' two or three or [four] ' or five or six up to ' seven having a ' [single] vowel. These that [have] 10 two [vowels] ' seven consonants. Among ' the first names [some] are ' less. And ' since [these] do not have being, 15 either [you (sing.)] is an aspect [of] ' being [or] you do [not] separate ' the nature [of] our mind, ' which [is masculine] (and) which is [intermediate]. ' And you [put] in 30 those that resemble each other [with] ' the vowels [and] ' the consonants. Some ' are: bagadazatha, ' begedzethe, 20 [bègèdè]Pèzhèti, ' [bigidizithi, bogo]dozotho, ' [buguduzuthu], ' bògodozotho. ' [And] ' the rest [...] ' ba [...]. 32 But the rest are ' different: ' abebèbi, 'bob in order that you (sing.) might [collect] ' them, and be separated from the 8 angels.

And there ' will be some effects. ' The first, ' which is good, is from ' the three. It (fem.) [... 10] has need of [... 18] their shapes. (The) dyad ' and the monad do not resemble anything, but 25 they are first to exist. ' The dyad, being divided, ' is divided [from the] monad, and ' [it] belongs to the hypostasis. ' But the tetrad received (the) [elements], 20 and the fifth ' received concord, and the ' [sixth] was perfected by ' itself. The ' [seventh] received beauty, 25 [and the] eighth ' [received ...] ' ready ' [... 29] greatly. 33 And the [tenth revealed] ' the whole place. ' But the eleventh and the ' [twelfth] have traversed 5 [...] not having [...] ' it is higher [...] ' seven [...] 16 name(s) [...] 17 promise that [...] ' begin to separate ' them by means of 20 a mark (and) ' a point, the one which ' quarrels from the one which is [an enemy]. ' Thus [...] ' of being [... 26] the [letters] ' in [a ... 34 holy] or according to a [bond] ' existing separately. ' [And] ' they exist with each ' [other] in generation or in 9 birth. And according to [... ' generation ...] they do not have ' [... these [... 18] one [... speak the] ' riddle.

Because within 20 [the] sense-perceptible world ' there exists the temple ' [that measures] seven hundred cubits, and a river which ' [... within 25 ... for] ever, they ' [... three ' [... to the four ' [... seals']

For the rest, I will 5 [teach you] about them. This is 6 [the] generation of the names. She who [was not] 7 begotten [... from the] 8 beginning [... 15 with regard to [... 18 time(s), when [confined], when spread out, when [diminished]. 20 But there exists the gentle [word], 1 and there exists another 'word which [approaches] 1 being [... 1 in this [manner ... 26 And he [... 1 'the difference [... 1 and the [... 36 the all and a [... 1 the [undivided] beings 1 and the power [... 1 [having [... 5 intercourse with [the bridegroom] 1 separately and [... 1 whether [... 16 power 1 [... he exists 1 [in] every place [... 1 them always. 1 [He] dwells with the corporeal 20 and the incorporeal ones.

This is the word of the hypostases 1 that one should [... 1 in this way. If [... 1 with their 25 [... 1 helping [... those who stir up] the [... 1 manifest [... 1 if one 37 knows him, he will [call] upon him. 1

But there are words, some 1 which are [two 5 but others] existing [... separately ... 13 and] they [... 15 or those that [... 17 or according to [those that] have 'duration. And [these] 1 either are separate from [them] 20 or they are joined to one another, 1 or with themselves, either [the] 1 diphthongs, or the 'single [vowels], or every [... 1 1 or [... 16 or [... 1 'exist] just as [... 1 exist [... 1 the [consonants [... 38 they exist individually 1 until they are divided 1 and doubled. Some 1 have the power 5 [... 1 according to the [letters that are consonants ... 19 become [... 15 by themselves [... 1 and three (times) 1 [for the] vowels, 1 and twice 1 [for] the consonants, 20 [and] once for the 'entire place, and with 'ignorance for [... those that] are subject to change [... that] became 25 [... 1 together with the [entire place ... finally.

And [... 1 they all [... 1] exist 39 as hidden, but they were pronounced 1 openly. They did not 'stop without being revealed, nor did they stop without 5 naming the angels 1. The vowels [join] the [... consonants, whether] without [or] within, 10 [... 1 they 'said [... 'teach you ...] 1 again [for ever. They were counted] four times, (and) they were [engendered] 16 three (times), and they became [... 18.

For these reasons we have acquired 'sufficiency; for it is fitting that 20 each one acquire 'power for himself to bear fruit, 1 and that we 'never cast 'aspersions [on] the mysteries 25 [... 1 the [... 1.

For [... 1 which is [... the] souls [... the] signs of the Zodiac [... 40 a new hypostasis. 1

And the reward which will 'be provided for this one 'in this manner is salvation. 5 Or the opposite will 'happen there to the one 'who com-

mits sin. [The one who commits] sin 1 by himself [... 1 will be [... in a ... in a ... 12 in order that 'before you (sing.) examine 'the one who [... 16 might [tell] another 'about an] exalted power 1 and a divine knowledge 1 and a might that 'cannot be resisted, 20 but that you might examine 'who is worthy that he should 'reveal them, knowing 'that [... down 'to ... 1 who commit 25 sin. They [... the Father 1 41 that which is fitting. Do not desire 'to give power to the sense-perceptible world. 'Are you (pl.) not attending to me, 1 who have received salvation 6 from the intelligible world? 1 But (as for) these (words) — watch yourselves— 1 do not [... 13 he understands [... and he takes [... the rest], 'I will speak of] them. The [perfection 18 [... 1 in order that 'it might [not] increase. [But those] who commit sin [... 18 the embodied souls did not understand 'them. Those that are upon 20 the earth as well as those outside of 'the body, those in heaven, are 'more than the angels. The place 'which we [talked] about with 'words [... But these [... 25 stars [... 27 book(s) [... 1 whether already [... 1] into the [... 30 blessed is [... 42 whether he is gazing at the 'two or he is gazing at 'the seven planets 'or at the twelve 5 signs of the Zodiac or at 'the thirty-six] decans [... 12 are invisible, [... these reach up] to [... 16 and [these] numbers, whether [those in heaven] 1 or those upon the earth, 'together with those that are under the [earth], 20 according to the relationships and 'the divisions among these, and in the rest [... 1 parts 'according to kind and] according to [... 27 they will [submit 'since she has power 'above 30 they exist] apart [... 43 every [... 30 body(s) [... a] place [... divine B[arbelo 1 44 reveal them [... 1] in this [manner ... 1 this [... 20 intelligible angels], as she [... 1 intelligible [... above] 1 save(d) from [... 27 them [... 45 world [...] 1 and [... 6 world [... 21 they came [... 24 those who [... 46 is [... 1 'like [... 20 the voice of [... 1 name(s) [... 28 for 'ever [... 1 name(s) [... (pp. 47-54 missing)

' [... 55 1 I became silent. [... 1 'tell [me, [... 1 what is the [power ... 30] will wash [... 1 'entire generation ... 56] greatly, the ' [... much 'he is [... 1, and 30 [... 1 all [... 1] in the [... 57 knowledge [... 20 persevere [... 1 'the great [... 1 for I [became ... 58] bone(s) of the [... 1 in the [cosmic [... pp. 59-60 missing] 61 which is [under [... your daughters [... 2] for just as '[... the] kingdom of [... 5 But this one [they have [... 12 every [... 62 in the one who [... 1 not. [And [... 1.

For it is [... 1 who [... 1 you (pl.) did not know the [... 5 for the [... 10 partially ... 63] remain 'down [... the] earth. And 'they [spoke] like the angels 1 [... 1 is like the 'wild [beasts].
And he said, [...] 8 for [...] 17 from [...] 1 the number [...] 1' I saw [...] 21 and his [...] 4 a [voice [...] 1' and [...] his [...] 64 I [...] 1' because I [saw] all of [the lights] 1' around [me, blazing] 1' with fire. [And [...] 8 me in their midst [...] 16 angel(s) [who] 1' beside me. [And [...] 1' the [one] 30 [the one] who is in command of [the] spirits] which [...] 65 the angels [...] 1' which receive [...] 1' with those whom they [...] 8 and he [took] me [...] 11 he finished [...] 12 her] members [...] 14 the [invisible [...] 17 judgment] 1' thrown [...] 1' every [...] which is placed [...] 24 source [...] 1' living [...] 1' the two [...] 26 silent] 66 wash her from [...] 1' of God [...] 1' the one whom they [sealed] 1' has been adorned [with the] 8 seal of] heaven. [...] 11 to his [...] 1' great [...] 17

And I [saw] 19 unmixed [...] 1' those who [...] 67 they will become [...] 1' of God [...] 1' a woman [...] 1' while she is in [travail] 8 and] when she gives birth, [...] 10 with [...] 12 all of [...] 1' thing [...] 15] men [...] 1' and [...] 15] women [and men] in this manner [...] 1' no one [...] 1' those that are upon the earth] 1' knew] that [...] 1' every [...] 20 [and they will] take pity on these, [together with the] 1' home-born], for these will [pay] [...] 24 aeon(s) [...] 68 with those who will [...] 1' who have [...] 1' God [...] 1' from the [beginning] 8 in [the] [...] 8 name(s) [...] 12 mysteries [...] 1' in [...] 1' God [...] 16 manifest [...] 1' those who will know [him].

[M]arsanes

THE INTERPRETATION OF KNOWLEDGE (XI, 1)

Introduced by
ELAINE H. PAGELS

Translated by
JOHN D. TURNER

The Interpretation of Knowledge offers a unique opportunity to see how a Gnostic teacher uses New Testament writings and applies them to the church. Features of style and structure suggest that the text may present a homily intended for delivery in a service of worship. The structure of the discussion follows a common pattern of worship, in which readings from “the gospel” are followed by readings from “the apostle.” Correspondingly, one section of the Interpretation of Knowledge (9, 21-14, 15) uses passages known from Matthew to interpret the Savior's teaching and his passion; the next section (14, 15-21, 34) uses texts from I Corinthians and probably Romans, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians to interpret the church as the “body of Christ.”

The author is concerned to address a community that is torn by jealousy and hatred over the issue of spiritual gifts. Some members refuse to share their spiritual gifts with one another; others envy those who have received such gifts as prophecy and public speaking, and so stand out in the congregation. Some despise others whom they consider “ignorant” (that is, lacking gnosis); the rest feel slighted and resentful.

To rectify this situation, the author first recalls the example of the “great son,” Christ, who voluntarily humbled himself to demonstrate the Father’s love to his “small brothers.” Next the author takes up Paul’s metaphor of the body and its members, and combines it with the image of Christ as the Head of his body, the church, to remind the members that they share the “same body” and the “same Head.” Despite the diversity of spiritual gifts that the members receive, each one shares in the “same grace.”

Strikingly, this teacher develops an interpretation of knowledge rather similar to that of Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 or even of 1 John. Unlike Paul or the author of 1 John, however, this teacher offers a specifically Gnostic interpretation, implying that those who show jealousy and hatred betray their resemblance to the jealous and ignorant demiurge, while those who show love demonstrate the love of God the Father and of his Word.

THE INTERPRETATION OF KNOWLEDGE
XI 1, 1-21, 35

[... 14 they came to] believe by means of [signs] and wonders [and fabrications. And] the likeness] that came to be through [them] fol-