

HUGH NIBLEY  
Glendale, California 1969  
**SECRETS OF THE SCRIPTURES - THE CREATION**

Brothers and Sisters, I am actually glad that this is being taped tonight. I may make some sort of effort to organize! Because one thing leads to another, yesterday I was in Disneyland, and that gives you different views of things. There was one thing that was very impressive: all these exhibits you see about the structure of the Universe and all the historical views are drawn from just one source. There are two sources that we have: written and unwritten. By the written records, I mean an accumulation of human written records which has been going on for thousands of years. It's immense, and it's very valuable and, would you believe it, nobody ever considers it. Oh, I'm not talking about special historical studies but these very interesting things they do on early American history--the frontier and so forth--or, glimpses back into the Middle material as a single writing. What will it tell us about the world we live in? We are all guilty of underestimating and largely ignoring this written record. (I'm going to talk about one phase of that tonight). This is a tremendous spectacle. It would be a wonderful thing if Walt Disney was alive now, and I am sure he would leap at the chance.

This mere collection of written documents is one of the great spectacles the world has to offer. When the documents first started coming out in great numbers, (before they had been doing it in the 8th century on, especially) with the Council of Constance and finally with the fall of Constantinople in 1453, vast numbers of ancient documents that had been reposing in the east and various places for a long time, suddenly poured into Europe. And they were collected and they were organized in great ducal, royal and imperial libraries, sometimes by very rich individuals such as the Colonna family in Rome, etc. And they captured the imagination of the age. They would have them organized in great rotundas, tier upon tier of this knowledge, organized chronologically and topically so that you would be completely surrounded with books on all sides, round and round, mounting gallery after gallery almost out of sight, in the form of a huge planetarium of written human knowledge. But, unfortunately for the books, at the same time the book of nature was discovered.

Bacon, Galileo, and Scaliger are strictly contemporaries here. At the same time, they discovered the book of nature, which is much easier to read, in a way. The men who could read it would be the great geniuses of the world--the Galileo's, the Kepler's, the Copernicus', Toracelli's, etc. But the average man could read it just as well as anybody else. After all, the beginnings of geology were simply by a Scotch farmer, James Sutton, who went out and started guessing about the rocks on the beach near his home. And anyone could play the game. On the other hand, mostly dunderheads read the written records. You didn't have to have any genius at all to read them, but you had to have training. You had to know what the languages were and it didn't take any brains, but it took patience in the body of the thing to read the thing, you see. The result was that everybody wanted to play the game of reading the book of nature, because everyone's guess was as good as anybody else's, and you can guess like mad, you see. And so they completely ignored the written record from their knowledge. Joseph Justuscelli, who died in 1608, was the last man ever to make a serious attempt to read what the written human record said. Remember, it covers thousands of years. The human race has documented its doings for a long time and no one pays any attention to those. There's nobody in the world anymore who does that. Oh, it's a

librarian's paradise: we classify, we photograph, we reproduce, we restore and preserve, and we transfer. We can do all these tricks that the electronics can do today, but nobody reads them. Nobody knows what is actually in these books. This is literally true. A few specialists will consider documents in one area or in another, but what does the record as a whole have to tell us? It's the most interesting thing the way these have been shamefully been pushed aside. It would take a man of Walt Disney's genius to dramatize that and bring it to our attention. (I wish there were someone who could do that.) There actually is this terrific written record.

Now every book imparts information on two levels. You can see that in what the author intends to tell you and what he tells you unintentionally. And the unintentional is the interesting thing--it is most important. For example, Cicero wrote hundreds of letters which we still have, all sorts of things about himself, telling us he was the greatest man in the world. Well, at the same time he was really telling us that he was one of the greatest nincompoops who ever lived--he was a fool! He tells us that unintentionally. Intentionally he gives us one story, unintentionally another. But any document can be treated just like a fossil. Just as impersonally, just as scientifically as anything else. Books fell into disrepute for this reason: they would say, "Look, these are just the musty superstitions of the past age; let's forget them." These are actually a drag on the market, they're unscientific and it's true people who want them are not very scientific, but sometimes they were. In many cases, they knew a great deal more than we credit them with. Santillana, M.I.T., is writing a great deal on that. He shows that the Egyptians knew more than we ever gave them credit for. Levi-Strauss, another anthropologist, has written an astonishing book on that quite recently. We had the idea that since they lived so long ago and before our science, these must be superstitious ideas. We don't read the books for the ideas that people intended to convey but for what they tell us unintentionally all over the place.

Any page in any letter will give you all sorts of things about the times, circumstances, the person who wrote it, etc.--whether the man intends to tell you or not. And that's why we want to read these books. If we view all the books in the world as fossils, they can tell us much. As fossils, they're astoundingly perfect. There are no boney, broken structures here so much, but we have the flesh, we even have the life, the very thoughts of the creature left imprinted for our inspection. We don't have to fill the whole story from our own imaginations. It's because they are denied that privilege that the scientists are impatient of our books. They want a situation in which they can pretty well call the tune. But the books hamper and confine freedom of invention. (You see, what I could do, what I have done before is to show a lot of slides of these documents. Well, they mean nothing to you. I could show you rocks; I could show you pictures of star spectrums; I could show you ferns and other plants and fossils, and you could guess as well as I. A person that really knew something about it could be very instructive for me, couldn't it? But you haven't; I mean, you might just as well be showing nothing at all. So there's no point to showing slides or this sort of thing, is there?) And this is one of the reasons why the books have been shoved aside and are ignored. People can't get at them, can't get open. As a spectacle, they are quite a thing. But what is in them? What do they actually say? I tell you, nobody knows, nobody reads them, nobody knows what is in the records of the past, and they're enormous today. They are now making in Europe a microfilm card catalog of all of the books that have been printed since the invention of printing. And there are only twelve and one-half million. And, well, there are almost that many books inside the Widener Library today. You don't have to read them all, but it's astonishing how little has been read of certain areas.

Now comes an interesting question: If you were to read these written records, would they give you the same picture of the world that the scientific transcripts into books give us? In the scientific, the book of nature has been read, they give us one picture and these written books give us another picture, and they go back. (Remember reading them both impersonally, we're viewing them both as phenomena.) No they don't. They give a total picture of what was going on in the past, the so-called scientific. Now, this is really very good news, because until now, we have been told there is only one possible valid picture of the world and that is the picture that science gives us at the moment. A lot of the scientists are getting over that now--men like Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn. People like that are giving us a very different picture, showing us that it's always changing--which we should have known all along anyway. We shouldn't be stuck with just one image, even if we are laymen and can't understand the scientists. When you have to take it, this is it; that's the voice of authority speaking, and I'm sorry we'll just have to settle for that. But it isn't particularly good news because in recent years the picture's become a rather dismal one and many scientists have been talking about that, and quite a number of them say the picture's not only dismal but false in many respects. There's something radically wrong with it. It doesn't match the real world we live in, certainly not in all points. Then why do we accept it? Because, I say, we've been told there's no alternative. Many scientists have said that about evolution. It's a very deceptive tool, but they must use it because it's the only one they have. So, we've been left with this one picture of the world and all the time there's been this other one from the books. Now, I don't say it will give you a true picture of things or anything like that. But I will say that there might be something very wonderful there if you went and looked, but nobody goes and looks. It's just too much trouble.

Since World War II some very new and important additions have been made to this library. We are buried now under an avalanche of manuscripts. We don't even pretend to read them anymore. We just give up trying. We've reached the saturation point and we don't even know what's in the books. They could be full of great surprises. I'm sure we all know about the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Chenoboskeia, i.e., the Nag Hammadi texts, found in Egypt at the same time, the earliest Christian library; the Bodmer Papyri; the Mandaean and Manichaean texts discovered recently. Before them slightly, the Chester Beatty Papyri and Odes of Solomon and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri. We can go back to the great library collections of the 19th century: Babylonian, Assyrian, and Egyptian libraries, etc.

Now, what could we do? We try approaching this different ways. Simply to describe them when they are found, and under what circumstances would take many hours and then you would know the books were there but you wouldn't know what was in them. We can make some generalizations about them. They're not found as separate documents but in batches, whole libraries turn up. It isn't that you find a document here and a document there, there's just a great flood of them. They are found in great collections, and their value and significance can only be gradually appreciated because what they contain is quite radically different from what we thought about certain things before. Remember, people haven't been studying the document picture, and when these have been found only since World War II, it left everybody rather embarrassed. There are only two or three people in the world that could read the Dead Sea Scrolls or the Nag Hammadi texts. And then they called for a re-evaluation of all the other stuff. The entire library has to be re-evaluated and we go and look back and we find many things we've

overlooked, many things we didn't even know were there, and that we got the whole thing wrong in the first place anyway and are going to have to do the whole thing over again because of these new discoveries. This has been a very embarrassing thing. Well, we could describe the contents of one or two, we could take one or two really good examples, such as the Serekh Scroll, or the Apocrypha of John or James and go through them in some detail. But then we have missed the cumulative impact, the fact that there are not one or two but hundreds of these documents and they match each other. So what do we do? Well, the best thing is to look at some of the teachings that are found in all of these documents that are very different from what anybody expected.' That's what we'll talk about. We'll talk about teachings found in all of these documents that are radically different. (And, as I say, I'm glad the tape recorder is going. It's going to be a job to type it and we certainly are not going to stop for footnotes to spell out the names of all these titles and references. We started giving some of these references the other day in Orange County. I think it just confuses people, because they've never heard of these things before. But once in a while, we'll indicate the type of documents we're quoting and where it came from. But you must realize there are many, many of these.)

Now, why are we able to accept these? Why haven't we been able to sweep them under the rug just like we've done before? Because of the circumstances of their discovery. None have been willing to accept from them what they have refused to accept from the other sources in the past. The Didache was just as sensational when they discovered it, but they came one by one and people were able to push them aside. But you can't do it now because the documents are very old, they're older than that, they've been preserved in their purity and nobody has got at them, they're not copies of copies of copies, as everything else is. (See, all of our classical literature is copied so many times that we don't have a manuscript anywhere near the original.) But these are the originals, we've never had anything like this happen before. These are libraries that were hidden to come forth in their purity in the due time of the Lord. But the people who hid them were aware of the fact that they were hiding them for a long term, a long rest to come forth at a later time. So that when they would come forth, they would not be distorted and changed and everything different. So now they've come forth and we can learn to accept things from men that we'd never taken from anybody else before. Heretofore, conventional Christianity and Judaism have exercised strict control over documents as they've been discovered. And they've decided what's to be admitted as orthodox and what should be rejected, or this is just Gnostic or something else. You can't do that anymore. We only have to let the Jews and Christians speak for themselves because their documents are so much older, much purer, and we cannot force them to say what they don't want to say – as we've always been able to do before.

A good example of this teaching that has been propounded in early Christianity and in the early Jewish documents is that another of these documents we've been forced to accept against our own will is that of cosmism. Cosmism was an idea that was always coming out in these early sources, and that made them rather offensive. It is the hallmark of early Christianity, of what Jerome calls primitive Christianity – the kind he didn't like. He says we have to get rid of it. He says, "I will admit this is the teaching of the early church." That's true, it's rather embarrassing to us, but he says we've outgrown that, we're much too intelligent for this sort of thing now. The thing they accepted in early Christianity was this literal interpretation of things which Karl Schmidt, the greatest documents student of the last days, labeled cosmism.

The idea is that somehow or other the physical cosmos is involved in the plan of salvation. It was there all the time, and as we are living in it, that is part of it. It was the prevailing doctrine of the University of Alexandria. And it prevailed with tremendous authority. Everybody was spiritual, everything was allegorical at that time. And the influence of neo-Platonism was very strong at this time. The idea was that anything that is spiritual, anything that is divine has nothing to do with the physical world whatever, because God is pure spirit and matter is vile – any matter, anything that is physical is vile, it's a mistake, it shouldn't exist at all. This is a natural reflection of the moral feelings of the times of the people. Matter was vile in those days. People couldn't even conceive of a normal existence that wasn't grossly immoral. Things got very bad, so they thought of the flesh as being necessarily vicious; therefore, God could have nothing to do with it. The idea that the physical cosmos could have anything whatsoever to do with our existence hereafter and before we came here was regarded with the utmost abhorrence. But, whether they liked it or not, the early doctors were faced with certain basic doctrines which embarrassed them very greatly and confused them so that, as Origen says, it makes him so ashamed of himself that he almost dies with shame when he thinks of the idea that Jesus was born as a person, as a human being, as a little baby that cried and fussed and had to be changed and all that sort of thing. He says that it is a mystery which is beyond the apostles, beyond even the angels; no one can understand how such a thing is possible: the idea that here we are living in a physical universe and a physical world in physical bodies and that God created the physical creation. They always talked about God, his great epithet, when speaking to the pagans or anyone else, was that He was the Creator, He was the one who created what? This physical world. What an awful thought! It actually sickened the doctors of Alexandria to have to face up to the fact that God created the physical world, that Jesus came, that God came, and was incarnated in the physical body and then hereafter provides a physical resurrection, because there is no other kind of resurrection (well, Jerome says there is, a spiritual resurrection – that's the only one that counts.) But they couldn't get around that. And the fact that there are physical concomitances in things greatly embarrassed them. But now these early documents that are being discovered now are just full of this, and they tell us a lot about it.

The doctrine of creation from nothing is one example. God made the world out of nothing – *ex nihilo*. This was necessary to avoid the taint of cosmism, the idea of God working with matter, of processing it, of adapting it, of using it as a workman, as an artisan, or as a super scientist or something like that, this was utterly abhorrent. The idea is that God merely has to talk, he merely utters a word and it is, and that's that, completely and fully organized. I have a statement here by Hugo Broner, a great Jesuit writing now, says the only concept is that God just thinks and it is all there at once, organized complete in all its forms. The idea of His working matter, using something that was already there, is utterly horrifying, because that deprives Him of all His divinity. It involves Him with the physical world. Well, the Moslems get on this same track, too. They don't get very far because, as Fred Hoyle says, "I challenge you to make three meaningful statements about anything without some reference to the Physical Universe." And when you start out with these basic principles of Christianity: the creation, the incarnation, the resurrection, all physical, how are you going to get around it? There's nothing wrong. But Justin Martyr, the earliest of Christian apologists, writing 300 years before Origen, emphatically says, in the apologies, "The early Christians did not believe in creation out of nothing, but believed that when God created the world, He organized matter." Now, this is the theme that these new documents have a great deal to say about. And somebody has been writing articles on this

recently, a good many of them. Richter, for example, in a number of recent studies, pointed out, "It's not until we get to the doctrines of the church in the 4th century, wholly committed to the prevailing teachings of the school, that we hear of creation out of nothing. Before the 4th century the early Christians didn't believe in that at all." They believed that God created the Universe out of stuff and that He organized it. Now, how He did this, the way he does it, is one of the most intriguing aspects of the doctrines we are talking about.

There are the Nag Hammadi manuscripts (Nag Hammadi is the Arabic for the old monastery the Greeks called Chenoboskeian, about 60 miles north of Thebes where the Nile takes a big bend and it's about 10 miles off the river in the eastern desert.) And here in the same year and under very much the same circumstances in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, a peasant, while digging for fertilizer, found a special jar just like the Dead Sea Scrolls were buried in. It contained 13 volumes, beautifully bound in leather. They weren't scrolls at all: they were volumes and marvelously preserved just as if they had been written yesterday. They were regular books with pages: we still have the wrappings and bindings. These leather bindings contained 49 different works, 5 of them repeated works. One of these 13 volumes is in the Jung Museum in Zurich. (They may have to give it back to the Egyptian government, there's a big fuss going on about it now.) The other 12 are in the old Cairo Coptic Museum in Cairo. As of 1977, perhaps earlier, all of the texts are together again in the Coptic Museum. These contained 49 works which were written and preserved and put away in an early church, and many of them go back to the 1st century, others to the 4th century. Most of them are translations of Greek documents which are lost today. They are all in Coptic and they have started to come out now. As with the Dead Sea Scrolls, there was a lot of political trouble and otherwise to keep them from coming out.

This library is a marvelous thing. Amunnik says that they were written in a little local country church in Egypt before the apostasy ever took place – before there was any Gnosticism. This represents the pure teachings of the early church – that's what we have. Now, we won't discuss this problem here. These documents are very numerous and can be correlated with others. At the same time, especially through the efforts of a woman called Elizabeth Drower (she's in her 80's now) who spent many years among the Mandaeans of southern Mesopotamia, we know something about their very secretive religion, a last holdover of the people who came from the Dead Sea. Their traditions and their ancient writings, describe them as leaving the Qumran people at the fall of Jerusalem. They first went up to Haran, then they went down the river and they are still 2,000 or so people remaining. They have their own language and they keep these marvelous records they've kept for all this time. They go back to the Dead Sea Scroll people. They went down in the time of Joseph ben Rekha (they call themselves Rekhabites). He came just before Lehi came out into the desert. So they were doing this sort of thing in Book of Mormon days, going out into the desert to live the gospel in its purity, setting up their own churches and communities like out in the church in the wilderness and then practicing their baptisms, and these are the doctrines they taught in these communities. These Mandaean writings relate very closely to the Nag Hammadi, and to the Dead Sea Scrolls people, too, because they came from there. For example, up on the Tigris, quite far north, they found in 1906 the Odes of Solomon, viewed as the earliest, most valuable early Christian collection of writings known. There were these 42 odes. Now, lo and behold, one of the Odes turns up in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in this Nag Hammadi collection way down in Egypt, way up the Nile at Thebes – more of the Odes in their old Greek form, several hundred years older than the Syriac texts we find over

here in Mesopotamia. But the idea is all these writings come together. We have a big collection from the east, we have a big collection from Qumran, from Palestine, we have a huge collection from southern Mesopotamia – all discovered since World War II and all sitting together showing early Christian and early Jewish communities out there, all teaching very much the same thing.

For all of these people matter was important; they weren't ashamed of it at all. Peter says in the Clementine Recognitions, "There's absolutely no evil in matter as such." As the Preparation of Eusebius explains, "Matter is not the cause of evil," and the great Origen, the earliest and by far the greatest Christian theologian who lived in the 1st century, says, "I cannot explain it, but it is important nonetheless to understand that this world is not pure incorporeal ideas." (That was a tremendous concession for a man of Alexandria to make. He had been born and brought up at the University of Alexandria. His father was a professor there and he was full of that. All his life he fought with these two doctrines – the doctrine of the early church – because he was very honest and upright and yet he was completely indoctrinated in the teachings of Alexandria. This was quite a shocking thing for him to say.) In one of the very recently discovered ones, it says, "God the Father of all our eternal 'bodies, bringing about the resurrection of the flesh to members of the Godhead, do not be afraid of the physical world of the *physis* (they used the Greek word here). The living spirit clothes itself with the body of elements through which it is enabled to carry out works in the world." The creation means matter and organization: They will accept matter and not be ashamed of it. (We have a lot of quotations here from dozens of different writings all on the same subject.) Creation means organization of the elements, as the manuscripts so-called Bruchianus Manuscripts. Manuscript No. 96 says that first we have matter. All right, so what do you do? You organize it to create things. God is aware of it and makes good use of it. His activity and concern are everywhere evident in number and measure, because if you are going to get any kind of creation, any kind of life at all, you're going to have consistent patterns – you're going to have number and measure. Now this is taken as evidence of an organizing mind, an organizing activity. Regular divisions of time and place mark an ordered universe. Cosmic means order. In the Pistis Sophia, a very important early work, it says, "There is a place afforded for everything, a *topos*." (Some Coptics use Greek words every once in a while because they don't have any that will exactly express the idea of *topos*, a place for a certain thing to be performed.) There is a numbering of souls for each world and a dispensation is not completed until that number has been fulfilled. Every soul stays in its appointed *topos* until it has fulfilled the mission and task appointed for it in that place. "God's plan sets times and seasons," says the Apocrypha of John. The Dead Sea Scrolls are obsessed with this idea of the times of iniquity, of time allotted for Satan to tempt mankind, and the times of suffering of various ends as the case in the major periods. And there is the cycle, you mustn't hasten the time or you mustn't delay the time – it's always warning us. There are times of suffering and times of punishment. All of them exactly prescribed from the beginning: they belong to the plan. Time and matter and space are all organized here. It's well understood that all this setting of times is for our nature and for our testing purpose in this world. (It's only a temporary arrangement.) The characteristic of this particular world is that for God there is no time, at least He doesn't use our time at all. They all make this very, very clear.

The Manichaean Writings, a psalm book, a very important early one, says on the creation, that if you ever set yourself to build, let the measuring come first, for if you build without a measuring device in your hand, your building will be crooked. Measurement is the very essence

of creation.

The Whole creation, says Clements of Alexandria, who was the teacher of that Origen, the first Christian philosopher, is to be understood as a *physis*, the imposing of an inner order on outer material. This is a progressive organizing of material from the center out. You build the structure inside and what you have outside is background material, and you take that into the structure as you build. And this is the way, even Clement of Alexandria, in the "Stromatum II," describes creation. He says, "It is the imposing of an inner order on outer material, progressively built out this way. It is all organization and synthesis."

The Apocalypse of Abraham, a very early Jewish work and one that has interesting stories of Abraham, matches remarkably our Book of Abraham in many points. God is hailed as the one who does bring order out of confusion whenever worlds are demolished, ever preparing and renewing worlds for the righteous. Codex Bruchianus says, "Creation is organization." But God is, by definition, the one who brings order into the confusion of the universe. But it is not enough to arrange matter. We have the matter here, and when you create, you organize it. But that isn't enough. You merely have an inert structure now. But structure in itself isn't divine. Structure can't produce anything in itself. You can organize your molecules or your electrons and change them into any order you want, but there must be something else, according to these people. (Incidentally, they get very much like our science fiction writers. I was looking up some science fiction books in the bookstore the other day and these were the ones. I jotted them down and you'll notice they all have certain things in common. You say, "Now wait a minute, aren't you getting rather close to science fiction here?" This gets remarkably close to science fiction. They start all sorts of theorizing to explain how the physical cosmos was organized and you will see that some of these suggestions are extremely ingenious. They show remarkable insight, astonishing knowledge. But consider the titles you find in these science fiction books. The first one is Bow Down to Worlds, the worshipping of Satan; Ten Years to Doomsday, the doomsday book; The End of Eternity, Second Foundation, worlds founded again; Billineum, obviously from the millennium; The Burning World, the destruction by fire; Passport to Eternity, Worlds for the Taking, Woodry's Inferno, Beyond the Galactic Rim, Possible Worlds, Three Stigmata of Palmer Edrich, Trans Finite Man, Stranger in a Strange Land, Bowman's World, Earth Abides, Those Who Watch, Recalled to Life. This was just a small collection of recent science fiction.)

But what do all these have in common? You notice, these are ideas which are basically scriptural and apocryphal. These are taken from the traditions of the Bible. Now this is a surprising thing, isn't it? Why should these be more interesting than the originals? Why don't we read the Apocrypha in the Bible instead? Look what the Christian world has done. They've emasculated the whole thing; they have denatured the whole thing. Till now this is just a spiritual or symbolic thing. We find it more interesting. Why? It's fiction, but it's science fiction. There's possibility that such a thing could be so. When you bring that word "science" in, it's conceivable that this could be, and as long as there is a slight, remote possibility that such a world could exist, they try to interest you. But you read the Bible and you say, "Oh yes, but that's an abstract. That's not even fourth dimensional." See what they have done to the scriptures here? Well, how do you know these scriptures were originally meant to be taken literally? Any history, any scientific structure can be interpreted allegorically but no one goes to the trouble to invent really good history to have it denatured as allegory or symbolism. Most Bible stories weren't made up,



that scripture wasn't made up for the purpose of being allegorized and was certainly not invented as an allegory or as a symbol. That was read into it later, until the fourth century. It never occurred to anyone to do that. Remember what these doctors of the fourth century called the Early Christians: they called them 'primitive', and that has a note of contempt in it. They call their stories 'old wives' tales' because they really believed in these things. They called them literalists and made great fun of them. (That is the word Jerome used for them.) And we are the spiritualizers. We understand all these things in a spiritual sense. We are not contaminated by this idea of a physical world, but you go back to the early Christian world and they accepted these things physically, and this puts everything on a different footing. It makes them more interesting than science fiction. Science fiction is only rather a horrible aberration from this, but it's so much more optimistic, and you might even say more convincing. Let's see what these people have to say about it now.

We have got them admitting that matter is there, and that it's organized, but it's not enough to arrange matter with order and system. Such matter remains, for all its pretty patterns, inert, background stuff. "Without life, matter is inert and helpless. It must be improved by the action of light." (They have a special force they call light. That isn't light, as we understand it exactly.) You can't just have structure. It's not enough. And whenever that active principle is withdrawn, matter at once falls back into its original, that lifeless, inert condition. We think of the inert gases, like argon and xenon and helium, and so forth. When they are activated, they glow. As soon as you take that away, they are nothing. And the same way it says here about all matter: some activating force must touch it.

They call it the spark, and this word occurs thousands of times. They are always talking about the spark throughout here, and this is what makes the difference. Whether you are in the Mandaean or the Manichean, whether in the Dead Sea Scrolls or in the Coptic Documents from Egypt, they are all taken up with this idea of the spark, because the spark can meet the gap. The spark is that which comes from one world to another. The spark is that which animates at a distance, too. Oh, they make a big thing of this spark. This vitalizing principal is everywhere referred to as the spark, without which, says the so-called Second Coptic Work, "there is no awareness." It's all right to have this electric eye in the supermarket open the door for you when you go in. You say "Thank you very much" but there is no consciousness there. It hasn't been polite or anything else. Without this spark, you've got the mechanism working but there is no awareness. You have to be aware of something. Unless the electric eye is actually aware of you, there is no mind at all. It's a gadget.

Now, there is a lot of this in the Cabala. The Jews adopt this. In the Cabalistic literature are the Hasidic forms that preserve these old teachings among the Jews, just as certain out-of-the-way Christian sects preserve, sort of in the dark, sort of secretly, sort of underground – a lot of these teachings well into the Middle Ages. Some of them emerge late. But the Cabalistic teachings about how God's intelligence unites with matter to form life, to form a unity, is depicted in the Cabala, "as a God that is in everything". Now the Gospel of Truth, one that is very important (this was published at great expense), the first of the Coptic Documents to come out in 1956, says much the same thing. It says, "Unity engulfs matter within itself like a flame." It isn't enough to build your structure from the center out but you must engulf it with a life system, engulf it like a flame. Instead of an absolute separation of matter and spirit, an all or

nothing arrangement like that of the Gnostics and Neoplatonists whom the church fathers followed, the earliest Christian apologist, Aristides, explained that everything is a mixture of the two. To produce a new thing, you must have the original matter and you must have the spirit to infuse it. Otherwise, you won't, because structure alone won't do it.

Melitus, one of the early Christian fathers, says the same thing. He says "all the world is moved as a body is moved by the spirit, so all the world must be moved by some animating spirit itself, not just our bodies, but everything." When this vitalizing principal touches matter, according to the Psalm of Thomas, one of the new Syriac Manuscripts, consciousness is expanded. The worlds of darkness gathered and beheld his brightness. They breathed his fragrance. They orbited about him, and bowed and knew him and worshipped him. It is this implanting of the mind with the thought of life which works within the elements to bring about the creation. (That's the Berlin Papyrus). "At the same time," says this same work, "the great thought came to the elements in united wisdom, spirit joining with matter." You get this animating principle but this still isn't enough. Though joined with spirit, matter is not spirit but constantly undergoes processing. The matter itself is just part of the story. It can be imbued with this thing, but it will always change. It is always undergoing processing and changing. Only progeny is eternal, only sons go on forever, says the Gospel of Philip. They tell us that this was the plan of heaven, that part of Satan's plan was to have a static world that would not change, it would not only be perfect, it would be static in its physical structure as well. But the plan agreed on was that worlds would constantly come into existence and pass away, and this process would never cease. Matter would always be processed again and again, and this would go on, whereas, this same writing says, only sons are eternal. Sonships, progeny goes on forever. And we make use of these other elements. To make it serviceable to the needs of the spirit, as this gospel says, as Philip puts it, there is no permanence in matter which is always undergoing change as worlds come into existence and pass away. Only progeny is eternal. All the *physis*, all the physical nature, all plasm, all organized things, all structure, is interdependent and will return to its old roots, but the root is not destroyed.

There's a passage in this Apocalypse of Abraham which is very good on that. He sees what's going on inside of a star. It's a very exciting picture that he displays here. (Reminds you of the process of converting from one element to another; helium to hydrogen, and then later on the carbons. Cycle goes on.) And this is the way he describes it. He's taken there by this angel. This is when Abraham was praying and he wanted to know how the stars were made, and the angel actually takes him. And he says his spirit left his body. He didn't go there physically but he saw this, and he was completely bowled over. He says he saw an indescribably mighty light, and within the light was a tremendous fire, and within that was a host of mighty forms that are constantly seething and exchanging with each other, and constantly change their shape as they move, altering themselves, one exchanging with another. Well, Abraham frankly doesn't know what's going on and he says to the angel, "Why have you brought me here? I can't see a thing. I've become weak. I think I'm out of my mind." (I think we would too if we got too near to a star! A red giant, a white giant, even a white dwarf would scare you enough!) The angel tells him to stick close to him and not be afraid. But when later they were both wrapped in something like flame and heard a voice like many rushing waters, even the angel took precaution. Abraham wanted to fall on his face, but he could not because, "there was no ground or earth anywhere to fall on." So, he couldn't even fall on his face. And he was awfully glad to get back home again.

Abraham was taken out and he saw these chemical changes going on inside the stars.

The most useful property of matter is its plasticity. It can be adapted, according to these writings. It submits to handling. Eusebius points that out in the Preparation: "You can't make everybody in the church responsible for sinful man in his sinful nature." Physical matter is just a tool that we use. We just put it to our purposes. Matter can't help itself – it is inert. Remember, man is to act and not to be acted upon (Book of Mormon). Eusebius says, "Matter submits to handling. It can't help itself be the cause of evil." We simply put it to use – the uses we want. It's always being reformed, reorganized, and renewed in accordance with the law of plenitude. Nothing is wasted. There's no space where there isn't something. And if you're not using it for one thing, you can use it for another. And then there's the principle of multiple use, so that worlds can be used by spirits of various levels at the same time. This is very nicely explained in these writings.

And if it is to be reused, so to speak, it must be melted down. I left out some of these interesting quotations where they talk about the trough, the process in which they melt it down. It seems that they have to get it orbiting in the trough. And in this trough it is selected out, and they can draw out certain elements when and where they are needed. They subject them to certain temperatures to do this, etc. Here's what the Pistis Sophia says about this: it had to be decontaminated, melted down and then purified. There's a lot about decontamination. The action of the light on matter always has a purifying effect. Whether for the first time or whether it's being reused. Indeed, there's no such thing as used or old matter, since by the action of the spark or of the light upon it, the matter always becomes renewed. Let matter rejoice in the light, for the light will leave no matter unpurified. The treasure, or the physical substance which is used in making anything, must be taken from some other treasure. You don't create it out of nothing. (This is another principle: in Manuscript 96.) Chapter 45 of MS 96: The various elements must first be separated, cleansed and reclassified. "When the flame-engulfed substance forms a new unity," the Gospel of Truth says, "then obscurity becomes light and death becomes life. And the old jars are broken to become new." (See, you use old material to make new.) In the Clementine Recognitions, Peter explains to Clement, "The perfect form, says the philosopher, is the egg. But the eggshell exists only to be thrown away, to be crushed, to be used. Just a step to be used in something else. So it is in the physical universe, in the world." He's explaining heaven to him. As things go on and on, all the worlds pass away to make way for new ones. Such as the egg, this perfect form, instead of being contemplated with other satisfaction forever after, exists merely to be crushed, stomped upon and used again – eaten by the chickens to make good egg shells the next time. But they use this figure a lot about breaking up the old jars to make new ones. A like figure exists here: "God took dead bones," the Odes of Solomon says, "and covered them with bodies." They were inert. And he gave them energy for life. Things were brought to corruption by God. This cycle of corruption is not disaster. Death isn't a terrible mistake, but rather a part of the eternal plan. Everything physical must go through this change. It's not to be permanent; it's not to be fixed. There are other aspects of permanence in our life, but not there. And so corruption was brought about by God, and this was something the doctors of the church would never consider. Things were brought to corruption by God that everything might be dissolved and then renewed, and so founded on a rock!

So, you're founded on a firm principle of continuing existence, but it must be corrupted first to be dissolved and then renewed. Well, this corruption shall put on incorruption, as Paul

says. Every new creation, according to this, leaves behind the matter of its old aeon, its old age, its old period, its old cycle. It leaves it behind.

From the beginning, the elements were purified by the holy living bearers of life, and from the first contest they were mixed with a background material and have remained so ever since. This also explains that when the poison or contamination of old matter has been removed, the stuff becomes sterile. It's pure but sterile. Again, you have to do something to make it live again. It has to be re-energized, and he actually uses the word. He borrows the Greek word. He uses the word "enorgea". It has to be re-energized, it has to have more energy put back into it again because it has now been purified. It's ready to be used again. But, you see, it's sterile. You have got the poison and the contamination out of it, but now it has to be re-energized all over again. When old worlds pass away, a general state of confusion is passed through so you can organize a new one. Passages 13 and 17 in the Apocalypse of Abraham, where Abraham addresses God, says, "O Thou, who abolishes the confusion, the mixing up of the universe, the confusion that follows that disintegration of the world of evil and of righteous alike, for thou renewest the world of the righteous." This approach requires real space.

This idea of faith, the things that we have been talking about so far, has not been universally recognized by everybody studying these things. Some people have. But one thing they have recognized is the concern with real space going around. And the scriptures are completely taken up with these same ideas. These ideas weren't to be recognized; then we read the old books; we read the scriptures again – sure enough they are there large as life. "How could we have missed them all these years?" we say. We missed them because we have been warped and prejudiced by the accepted schools of thought that took over in the 4th century. But they recognize this, that in the Bible you have a lot of going and coming. They must be going from somewhere and coming from somewhere. There's a recent work by a Lutheran scholar who says the expressions such as "to visit the earth" and "he went and preached to the spirits in prison" cannot be taken in any but the most literal sense. They really thought they had to go somewhere in the early church. We don't think so now, after all, like St. Augustine says, "Well, God is everywhere. He can't go anywhere." He is perfect. He can't do anything. To do is the act of an unsatisfied body. Something has to be done that hasn't been done. Well, God has done everything so he can't do anything, can't go anywhere. That's the way they used to think in these terms of abstinence. But that's not recognized today. And a Catholic writer, writing very recently in *Verbum Domini*, says, "We are never allowed to forget that heaven is not only a state, but a place." Aquinas says that heaven is not place, that's absurd, that's a crude, old idea. Heaven is a state. It's a state of bliss. It is the beatific vision.

The Pistis Sophia says that it is the nature of every creation to seek a more roomy space. It's an expanding universe, these people described. Every creation has its tendency to seek a more roomy place. Every kingdom requires space. "We will go down to where there is space." By the law of plenitude of perfect economy, no space should be wasted and none should be crowded. "There is abundant room in my paradise," says the 11th Ode, "and nothing is useless therein." In the Ginza, a very important, a very old work of these Mandaeanes, Jesus is told, "Go down to that place where there are no skenas (skena is a *topos*, dwelling place; skena is the same word as the Greek skena, is the same thing as a shekinah, the holy spirit dwelling of the Jews. And in Syriac means an occupied place.) The Father says, "Go down to that place where there

are no skenas and no worlds. Create there for us another world after the fashion of the sons of salvation." The same writing explains that when the mass and number of the world is filled, a squeeze begins, and it's time for expansion. "All 'spaces come forth from the Father," says the Gospel of Truth, "but at first, it had neither form nor name." He organizes and supervises and sees that the place is properly and economically used. Everything is being controlled here. But the idea of pure space, of absolute emptiness is abhorrent to these people. There is no point to that. A total void without even chaotic matter is utterly abhorrent.

The ultimate form of damnation is to be with Satan. Paul says, Satan is the prince of the air. Demons have no place for their foot, no sure footing. They don't have a place, an establishment, no base of operations anywhere. To be deprived of the ordinances, says the Pistis Sophia, the ordinances of the Gospel, is to be like one suspended in the air. This happens very often in the writing of the Forty-Day literature. The Apostles ask the Lord, during the forty days after the resurrection, to show them what it is like before the creation and when the creation arose, and he tells them in these writings, "Don't ask for that." He says people can't remain in their right minds after seeing that sort of thing. Abraham has seen the star. He says you won't like it, you'll be terrified. "My Father worked out his kingdom in fear and trembling and I must do the same." Well, when these Apostles asked to see the spaces, and in quite a number of these writings the Lord says, "No, it's better for you not to." Because it is more frightening than anything else if you don't know what is going on. "Only the Lord," says the Gospel of Truth, "has penetrated the terrors of empty space." All spaces are broken and confused, especially during periods of transition from old worlds to new, for they have no fixity or stability at that time. In the Book of Enoch, the First Enoch, the ultimate horror is being in a place without a firmament, without a foundation beneath, a place kept as a prison for those that transgress. This is why it is so important, this idea of the rock, the foundation, or the cornerstone, because before you can begin any structure, before you can begin any plan, any life, any building, you must have some point on which you can fix yourself firmly. And what is that? I'd like to talk about that. I use the image of the rock for that.

There must be a rock, or what supports the rock. This, of course, was a main problem with the ancient cosmology, beginning with the philosophers of Melitus, (they say the earth is on the back of a tortoise. And what supports the tortoise? Well, he stands on the back of the great water that surrounds it. And what supports the water? Then you have to think fast, because something always supports it.) Our texts are very fond of the word *topos*. A *topos* is not just a space. It's a special space marked off and set apart for a particular purpose or activity. A *topos* is useful space, just as a "chairoi" is a period of time set apart for the carrying out of some specific task. Thus, we are often told that the Lord, having accomplished his mission on earth, returned to the *topos* from which he came. That's in the Gospel of John and also in the Gospel of Peter, and others. God started out the creation by making a *topos* for his children, that they might settle there, and there recognize and serve him as their father. In the Ginza, he tells Adam, "Adam, this is the place in which you are going to live. Your wife, Eve, will come and join you here," (notice the pre-existence), "and here your progeny will thrive." Then there is concept of distance, but this leads naturally the idea of multiplicity of worlds. (This has been implicit in all that we have been saying, and on this subject all these writings have a good deal to say.) After the plan of creation was accepted, it was communicated to all the other worlds. All the other worlds contributed something to the making of this one, because they rejoiced in such a project. For the

worlds exist, we are told in the Askew Manuscripts, so that intelligent spirits might come and inhabit them. Not only are they countless, according to Philip, but they have been going on forever. Adam's holy angels inhabit many worlds. "Thou light of our worlds, come and be king of our land and our city," as the Lord goes from one to another. "No words could describe thy power over all thy worlds." says the Ginza. "The Father taught me about the worlds of the Lord and the glory that abides therein. The atom of light treads upon the earth's trembling foundation that is laid in the midst of the worlds." Even Justin Martyr says that the Christian is promised boundless cosmoses. This is our promise that we shall inherit. And Maimonides spoke this, "This world is but a speck among the worlds and man is as nothing. Man is nothing in the midst of the worlds." It was the degenerate Minaean Jews who first taught that it was the only world, says the Talmud. To correct this we say in our prayers today, "Ola 'anim, ola 'anim", from worlds without end, using the plural. Well, Origen believed, says Jerome, that there are countless worlds. That he did not believe like the pagan Epicurus that they existed all at once, but that they were constantly coming into existence and passing away. This was the old Christian teaching.

"O Father which art in the heavens," 'Heavens' is always in the plural, in any Lord's Prayer that you can find anywhere. And when it says, "Our Father which art in the heavens," this is to be understood in the most literal sense, that the heavens are in the plural and that our Father is in the heavens. This has been recognized recently, I see here a Roman Catholic and a Protestant, both have written articles showing that. The Protestants say that the idea that this is the only world; that there are others, is not an early Christian but a heathen Greek conception taken over by the Church from Aristotle. And the Catholic writer in *The New Scholastic* says recently that, "The idea that the earth is the heavy center of everything and therefore the only world, this the sluggish earth, the center of everything. This is from Aristotle. This is not from the Bible. It was not held by the early Church." The idea that this is 'the only world, this is Aristotle's concept, was the science of the time, and not the Bible of the time. The early Christians believed in this multiplicity of worlds. It's only later that the Christian world, following Aristotle, a good scientist, went the other way. Over against this, our older Christian sources also remind us that in the great scheme of things everything is in the plural: worlds, universes, *propatoras*, plans, gods, spaces, saviors, and so forth. We've got multiplicity of worlds, organized on a common pattern. All the worlds are organized on a common pattern. For example, here is a newly found Apocryphon of James, but this is also said in the Askew Manuscript, in the Second Coptic work, in the Apocrypha of John: that in all the worlds there is a common pattern and the base of it is that a monad rules, that there is one rule everywhere, but he always rules through a presidency of three and through a council of twelve, no matter what the world is. This is a law, it says, which exists throughout all the worlds. A number of these sources talk about that. These repetitions are infinite in number and scope.

Carl Schrift believed that the Second Jehu was the most important of all early Christian writings. This is the best expression of early Christian teachings. And this tells us that a person who is sent to take charge of a new world, as Adam was sent to take charge of this world, is called a Jehu, a form of the word "Jehovah". And then he says, "As Jehu's become fathers," (once you have become established, then you become a father), "then you will appoint Jehus for new worlds who will in time become fathers and so on *ad infinitum*." So you have the Jehu's being promoted to fathers and then sending out other sons as Jehu's and so forth. Each aeon has created for its own host ten thousand times ten thousand. They like to talk about these things. In every

individual world he made three hundred and sixty thousand agents. In every dwelling place three hundred and sixty thousand other dwelling places. The earth and the planets are but atoms in an infinity of like systems. That's the Sefer Yetzirah, a very old Jewish work, widely recognized by the Jews.

Origen is always quoting from the early Church. He says, "This is not my opinion, this is what they used to teach," what the elders used to teach, when he says, "There will be another world after this one. And in the same way there were other worlds before this one. We thus share a common nature with other worlds." Or as Methodius, who was the last man to organize this material and bring it together, in the 18th volume of the Patrologia, "Christ came down from his vast rule and kingdoms and other worlds to save one percent of those on this evil earth. And to enroll the human race in the heavenly register." For this work is going on in a vast scale and it involves many other worlds. But what does this do to the Oneness of God, and so forth? Well, it does no harm at all. Because all is going according to the same system, and before anyone can be entrusted to take charge of a world he must be trusted.

We are here for the purpose to be saved and we must also be safe. Exaltation is something more. All will be saved in the kingdom of God, but who is safe, who can be trusted? When it talks about man's responsibilities here: "We are here to be tested whether we can be trusted to take charge on our own, because if you can be trusted completely you'd do the very same thing God would have done." You'd represent him completely. So there is only one God, only one ruling mind, and only one pattern after all. The oneness of God is never jeopardized here. The Askew Manuscript says, "There are many mansions, many regions, degrees, worlds, spaces, and heavens but all have but one law. If you keep that law, you, too, can become creators of worlds."

The Gospel of Truth says, "It is the perfect Father who produces the all, in whom the all is, in whom the all needs always. We are never free from needing him." We are still in charge, others are put in charge in whom he can trust, but always, it goes back to him. "Out of the one come the countless multitudes but yet remain in the One." "All the other worlds look to the same God as to a common sun." The crucifixion is effective in other worlds than this one. Another says, "All the cosmoses follow the pattern of a single world which is called the type, the arch-type. Ever since the beginning this has been so. Keeping the entire *physis* in the state of joy and rejoicing." (Because it has been organized, it's the same.) "The worlds exchange wisdom with each other because they are equally dependent on the most high." They have the same common source. "They are the heralds of His thought," this is the famous twelfth quote of Solomon, "by His word they communicate with each other. They know Him who made them because they are therefore in concord, they have a common ruler, a common lord, so they are in concord with each other. And they communicate with Him and through Him with each other. For the mouth of the most high spake to them." Another ode, "The worlds were made by His word and by the thought of His heart, so they are all as one. There is no rivalry or competition among them, but they are glorious in their firmaments and agree among themselves, fitting together like the lashes of an eye." "All rejoice in each other, each being more glorious and bright than the other." There is a hierarchy of brightness, the range is going on forever, each more glorious than the next.

When beings from different worlds meet, they exchange garments and treasures as a sign

of mutual esteem and identification. For the creation of endless worlds follows the single pattern as that laid down by the Creator." The planets then say "Lord, come. Lord of the Gods, Lord of the entire cosmos." They rejoice and say "Come, be our Head. Be our head of the whole world." This is the Parousia, when the Lord visits us for a while and we want him to stay with us. "The worlds will come before Him in order and in shining hosts," says one of the new homilies. "God is the Father of all the worlds," says First Clement, and everybody recognizes this as an authentic writing of the early Church, "He knows them. They keep their courses and covenants with Him. He calls them by name and they answer him from eternity to eternity. As the Father of greatness is in the glorious world, so his son rules among those cosmoses as first chief lord of all the powers." Thus, as one recent study observes, "The multiplicity of successive worlds tends towards unity. The cosmos is not simply a oneness of self, of nothing and nothing else," writes the great fourth century bishop Senisius, "but rather a multiplicity comprised in a oneness."

This is the terror of science fiction today. They say, "If you could only escape from this little confining world of ours and go out into the vastness of space, wouldn't that be a wonderful adventure?" So you go out there and what do you find? The same thing you find here. Just like landing in one airport, it's just like the airport you got on in. And so, it becomes rather depressing and finally it becomes actually terrifying, always just more of the same. It's a horrible trap from which you can't escape. The universe of the Middle Ages was not small. They thought in terms of billions of miles. It was tremendous, but it was closed. Makes no difference how big it is as long as it is closed. That's it, you see. You can't escape. There's just more of the same. You've seen it all. You're not going anywhere. That is the message, you see, of science fiction. That is why writers like Bradbury and Heinlein are rather turning away from it. They've rather got soured on it now because once they've gone through all the pieces they can think of, that's it.

Ah, but this is the nice thing about this teaching. You don't get stuck in that groove. And I think that's so nice about it. Sir Isaac Newton says, "Only little minds are impressed by size and numbers." What's the point to endless repetitions of the same? (I don't want more of the same.) One of the nicest things about early Christian cosmology is that it is not the repetition of sameness. The types are there but always expressed in individuals who never express the type in exactly the same way. Like no two snowflakes being alike, yet they all have to have six points, no more and no less.

The first thing to get clear, when we start talking about other worlds, is that we know nothing about them. This comes only by revelation. These things are not the extent or the projection of our own scientific world or literary experience and not the production of our own imagination. Those who have seen other worlds in vision tell us that we simply cannot imagine what they are like. That's why people take LSD and things like that, trying to escape from the idea that you have seen everything that there is to see. Maybe there is something better. If I thought that this were the only life, I'd be willing to take a trip with a chance that there might be some more broadening experience than this usual humdrum. There must be something more than this. Well, that's what people tell us here.

Well, we can't imagine what they are like. Remember what Paul said it was just after he talked about going to the third heaven. He says, I can talk about one who was caught up. I've seen those things. And what about it? "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into



the heart of man." Nobody has seen anything like it. Nobody has heard anything like it. You can't imagine what it is like. Nothing has entered into the heart of man. Nobody has ever imagined what it is like. So don't try to make yourself a picture of what Heaven is like. You'll be completely wrong. And that's good because I don't want it to be more of the same, more like this. It would be an awful bore, wouldn't it?

The Pistis Sophia, "Other worlds cannot possibly be described in terms of this world. Not only is there less in common between other worlds and this world, they differ as widely among themselves as any of them does from us." "In the limited confines of the flesh," the new and valuable writing of James explains, "which condition all our thinking, we can't possibly grasp the nature of other existences or even begin to count the number of other worlds." We are necessarily prone to think in terms of our world. Well, of course, we can't think in any other terms. We haven't the remotest idea of what it's like. We use the words. We do because we don't have any others. St. Augustine says, "This is the wrong picture I have given you, but at least it's a picture."

"When we say Light," says the Sophia Christi, "we think of our kind of light." But that's wrong. When we say marriage, for example, in the other world, it'll be entirely different there from what it is here, though, of course, we must designate earthly and heavenly marriage by the same name. Even though spirits may be eternal and thus equal in age, this writing explains, they differ in intelligence, in appearance, and in other things. And these differences are primary, as unbegotten as the spirits themselves. It is not something that's acquired. We are just different. Primary and unbegotten and no two alike.

The Lord tells the Apostles in the Epistle of the Apostles, "Where my Father is, it's entirely different than this world. There you will see lights that are nobler than your kind of light. In the millions of worlds that God has made for his son, every world is different from the others and wonderful in its own radiance." Quoting the Ode of Solomon, "Hence, one of the joys of existence is that the worlds constantly exchange with each other what they have – each possessing something different and peculiar to itself. There is nothing superfluous anywhere, which means that nothing is a mere duplication of something else." You wonder why we are not sharing the fun here. That's because we have been quarantined. We've been isolated for a special testing situation. Remember, the Lord told Abraham that when he was talking about the world. He said, "Worlds without number have I created and of all the workmanship of my hands there is not such wickedness as among thy brethren in all these worlds." Wow! So when you are here, you are getting a real test. This is something. And they talk a lot about that, this testing which is so much harder. We may mention that when we get to Adam. We are just going down the line.

This is one of the joys. The Berlin Papyrus tells us how every world breaks up into various types. There are five worlds, five spirits, five bodies, five tastes, they have the same senses there that we have here, but they are not alike. They don't respond on the same scale. Again, you think of the spectrum and all the things that we are missing that we might be experiencing. There are literally all kinds of strange beasts on other worlds that we can't even imagine. In some worlds reproduction is carried out differently from here. The Zohar, perhaps the oldest Jewish writing known, says, "There are all sorts of creatures for all sorts of environments. Only man is the same everywhere and yet he's the most individual of all." That's

wonderful, isn't it? See, we get all these creatures that adapt themselves to different worlds, like the monsters of the past, like dinosaurs, the pegasours, and various creatures living in other geologic ages. They had to adapt themselves and in other worlds it could be the same thing, with most fantastic forms of life, undersea and the like. Man is the only one that is the same everywhere because he adapts himself in a different way. He's the most different of all. For as Brigham Young used to say looking out over the Tabernacle, "I don't see two faces alike here." Isn't it marvelous. No two alike. "Viva la difference!"

The Hebrew Universe writes, "Some of the worlds consist of number of lives that are intermixed but can never become merged because each has its special character. Individuals remain forever themselves." Well, among ten thousand times ten thousand worlds, says the Ginza, you will find no two alike. "Before this world there was already a thousand thousand mysteries and a myriad myriad planets each with its own mysteries." That's from a prayer from the Manichean Prayer Book. The multiplicity of worlds as taught by the early church, formed a perfect unity as the strings of a lyre do. Each plays a different note together they make marvelous harmony. And if two play the same note, there is not much point to that. But you have to have this great orchestration. This is a common idea among the ancients. Plotinus taught that each star existed for the sake of the whole to which it contributed its individuality. Each has its particular part to play, and thus by being uniquely itself could make a contribution of maximum value.

We have this great difference and among the difference you have a hierarchy. There are some greater than others. So they all talk about the three degrees of glory. The one thing they all have in common is that there are three main degrees of glory. "You can visit the orders below you," says the Pistis Sophia, "but not the level or orders above you." The three degrees are described in great number of manuscripts and written down here. Ignatius writing to the Trallians says the same thing in the letter to the Trallians. Ignatius was the last church father who knew the mysteries of the Church, and he's writing a letter to the Saints, and they have asked him to tell them about some of these mysteries and levels of other worlds. And this is what he says in reply, "I could write to you about the mysteries of the heavens but I am afraid to do so. It would do you harm. I am able to understand the orders' of the heavens, the degrees of the angels, the variations among them, and the differences of dominions, of thrones and powers, and of the elevation of the Holy Ghost and of the, kingdom of the Lord, and the highest of all rules of God over everything else. There is an infinity of hierarchy in the world." But he died and took that with him. He said, "You're not ready for it yet, and the Church is not going to have it."

An early hymn says, "Christ rules in second place. His rule exactly duplicating the Father's but over a more limited number of cosmoses." Methodius explains this. (Remember he was the last Church father to correlate what stuff remained of his.) He says, "If other stars are greater than our world then it is necessary that they contain life greater than ours, and greater peace, and greater justice, and greater virtue than ours." (Remember, the Lord tells Abraham that there is one above another, there must be another higher than they, and then he says, "I am more intelligent than they all." But this is the principle set forth in the Pearl of Great Price.) "The spirits," says the Sophias, a newly found manuscript, "are equal in age but different in power, intelligence and appearance, and have been so throughout all time." Origen was greatly intrigued by this, by the diversity, and especially the inequality among God's creatures. How do you explain that inequality? If it is arbitrary then God would be unjust. So he concludes that the

levels on which we find ourselves in this world must some how have been merited in a former life. Well, he goes further than this. In this world we not only have a hierarchy but all things are moving forward. They are not moving backward. It was a dynamic concept of Origen's in which all things are moving forward. "Until Christ came, and opened the way, it was impossible to go from one *taxit*, one level to another. He is the great opener of the way." He is the way: that is why we call Christ 'the Way' because he opened the way by which we can progress.

Being the way, the Lord himself also advances. Thus, the word of the Father advances in the All, being the fruit of his heart and the expression of his will (The Gospel of Truth). Through the ordinances, we are told, one makes progress in knowledge and these ordinances go on and on. There are mysteries so much greater than the ordinances of this world, that they make leaves look like a grain of flour. Just like the sun looks like a grain of flour from those distant worlds. (We saw that they had the idea that when we went to our heavenly homes, some of us would be in the world quite remote in which we could still see the sun but so tiny that it would be like a grain of flour.) Here on this earth everyone descends, at it were, to the dregs and share the common substance with all living things and from here we begin to work our way up step by step to a knowledge of all things, ever seeking for instruction and the carrying out the required ordinances that will lead us to more. Thus we move from truth to truth, and the farther advanced one is, the faster one moves forward. This is the principle we are quoting here, "To them that have shall be given. With exaltation comes an increase, an acceleration of exaltation. And the farther advanced one is, the faster one moves forward." So the farther you get ahead, the faster you get ahead of the others. And now the example is Adam.

Here is one example, quoting from the Sophia, "Adam, having been established with Christ and God, (notice Adam having been established with Christ and God. They are always given as the Great Three,) next established his son set in second order which was to follow him on up." "He who has fulfilled all the ordinances and done good works cannot be held back." Another says, "We are taught the principles of salvation so that we cannot be held back in this world." The Manichean, "Those who shut the doors against me will be held back in the abode of darkness. Those who open the door will advance to the place of light."

It was the ancient Jewish teaching, according to Professor Goodenough, that the Patriarchs advanced to the spiritual stage where they assumed the garments of light and became saviors, saviors of their fellow. And R. H. Charles, commenting on the Book of Enoch says, "That for the righteous Jew, hereafter, life will be a constant progress from light to light as we become companions to the hosts of heaven." So the idea, you see, of eternal progress is an old Jewish concept and an early Christian concept, too. "To be true and faithful," says the very early Father Papias, "God gave dominion over the arrangement of the universe to the true and faithful. Their rule and their advancement goes on forever and ever."

"Because of the Plan," says Manuscript 96 "we are always to look upward. From time to time there is a great coronation day, a cosmic commencement day in which all who are worthy take over their new position, receive the spaces assigned them with their crowns of advancement." Clement of Alexandria and Origen, those two earliest fathers, each having one foot in the old Church and one in the new, characteristically accepted the doctrine of eternal progression at first, and then rejected it when the schoolmen finally talked them out of it. In

Origen's universe there are more exalted beings which leave the less exalted beings farther and farther behind. He compares their advancements to a series of examinations and makes much of the three degrees of glory, "three celestial glories like the sun, the moon, and the stars." According to him, the visible world is only a fraction of the invisible world which in turn is only a small fraction of the potential world which is to become reality in the eons ahead. This is all from the teachings of Origen, the greatest of Christian theologians before he joined the Doctors, when he was an early Christian. "After death," he says, "I think the saints go to Paradise, a place of teaching, a school of the spirits in which everything they saw on earth will be made clear to them. Those who were pure in heart will progress more rapidly, reaching the kingdom of heaven by definite steps or degrees." For Origen, according to Father Danielu, evil is nothing else than refusal to accept progress. This recalls a statement from the Pistis Sophia that hell is what lies in the opposite direction from that of progress. A state of inert and helpless being. Hell is not lively, it says. It is the opposite of action, energy, purpose and motion. The Devil has no real purpose. All he is trying to do is thwart someone else's purpose. He has no principle of action within himself. He is the destroyer, he is the accuser. And it is undeniable that this doctrine of eternal progression points inescapably in the direction of becoming like God. There are many mansions, regions, degrees, worlds, spaces, and heavens. But all have but one law. If you keep this law you will become creators of worlds. The worlds are that intelligent spirits might come and inhabit them and in the process and in due time become gods, since they are literally the children of God. "The sign of Divinity," says the Ginza, "is that one's glory expands." It is always increasing. It's an expanding universe, isn't it? Reminds me of a statement in the Philip, "A dog begets a dog, a horse begets a horse." And you call yourselves the children of God? Well, what does that mean? How can you avoid the conclusion in that case? What does a god beget? What does a god beget? Like begets like. You call yourselves the children of God. These people always called themselves that, the children of light and the children of God.

Conspicuously lacking in the divine hierarchy is any sense of rank or class. Obedience and subordination in no wise jeopardize individual freedom and leadership and command, and no way imposed dictatorship as long as the whole concern of those above is to reach down in love to those below, and those below strive to rise in love to those above. This sense of equality pervades everything here. Every spirit, says the Apocryphon of John, is a "monarchia", a rule unto itself, and subject to no one, having been in the very beginning with God. There is thus that about it which can never be forced.' (One of President Heber J. Grant's favorite expressions was "Never force the human mind.") (Some people consider the Apocryphon of John one of the most important discoveries in the last ten years.) "In this world all creatures are of the same material," says the Pistis Sophia, "and we should never forget it. God is testing us here to see if we can be trusted to rule over other creatures in love and not in arrogance. If we destroy the things placed under our dominion, just because we have power to destroy, we will never be trusted with real dominion, worlds without end."

Now, here are examples of the ordinances that these writings talk about. God operates through agents. He sends people, they are the 'sent ones'. In fact, the Swede by the name of Ridengren has recently written a book about that, *The Sent Ones*. Instead of coming personally and giving his messages, God gives others a chance to share in his activities so he sends them as messengers and with various duties. That is the thing that always stops the Muslims. They think that this is much too complicated, our Plan of Salvation. Why bring in all this complication?

Why can't you say that God does it and that is that? He does everything, He'll forgive us in the end and everything will be all right and we don't need anything but God. And you bring a son in, the Holy Ghost, and all this sort of thing. And you say, What's the Creed? What's the "shida"? Well, I testify that I believe in God, in his angels, and His prophets, and His apostles, and His books. Hey wait a minute. What are all these angels doing? I thought you believed in just God. Isn't that enough? What does He need angels for? Why can't He deliver His message directly? Why does He need prophets to come down and speak for Him? Why does He need books for you to consult? God uses agents. He uses 'sent ones' all the way through. We don't hesitate to admit that. It's far worse to admit that he has a Son.

God sends His agents to other worlds to engage in this operation. We all have a share in this sort of thing. We meet with 'the sent' most frequently, and most dramatically in the story of Adam. "After the physical Adam was created a messenger was sent to the head of all generations (that is Adam) and at his call, Adam awoke and said 'How the precious, beautiful life has been planted in this place. But it's hard for me to be down here.'" The 'sent one' then reminded Adam, "But your beautiful throne still awaits you Adam." Why then do you, the image of God, sit here complaining? All of this is being done for your good. "I have been sent down to teach you, Adam, and to free you from this world. Listen and return to the light."

The Ginza 488 tells how when Adam stood praying for light and knowledge, a helper came to him and gave him a garment and said to him, "Those men who gave you the garment will assist you throughout your life until you are ready to leave the earth." The commonest account of these visitors, also found in the Ginza, is that when Adam was created he was found in a deep sleep from which he was awakened by the helper who forthwith began to instruct him. And at his death also the 'sent one' came to take Adam back to the great, first parental house and to the places in which he formerly dwelled. First he was taken to a place of detention, of the "shomai", the place to be instructed. Here he learns the signs of the nail of glory and keys of the Kushta on both arms. The Kushta is a hand grip of some type. A messenger from the House of Light was sent to fetch him farther when he was ready. The reason that so often the Adam of light that comes down, (the preexistent Adam, that is the Adam of Light – that comes down to help us) is that he was the first one who needed help. And he as our Father sympathizes with us, and he wants to see that we get through. So he is our great helper. He is the Sent One. Of course, Jesus Christ is the Sent One of All. When Adam faced the Light and called for help the Lord himself approached him in glory and took him by the palm of the right hand and calmed him and instructed him, then he comforted Eve, and in this way he brought joy and aid to his descendents. He came to bring hope to Adam, who was in the image of God. This is repeated also in the case of Abraham. In the vast majority of accounts, it's the three 'sent ones' who instruct Adam. There is no conflict here. There are two great teams of three. There is the Creation which is Adam and Jesus and the Father, and there are the three that instruct Adam which are later the twelve, the three pillars of the Church: Peter, James, and John. Now, we have reference to them here in some of the writings in fashions rather interesting.

In the Berlin Papyrus, "The first man, Adam, was really the third sent one at the Creation." (There were three Sent Ones and he was the third one.) According to the Apocryphon of Adam, Adam was awakened from his deep sleep by three men from on high who said to him, "Adam, awake, arise and hear the teachings of the Savior." It was through a team of three,

according to the Sophia, that God created everything, employing them as his agents. As the Abbaton puts it, "the Father instructed the Son, who in turn instructed the great angel to go down and form a new world." But they didn't merely delegate the work, they worked together. "The three," says our source, "stretched forth their hands, took clay and made man. And many expeditions were sent to the earth before things were ready to receive him." Manuscript 96 says, "Whenever that life-giving spark is sent, it is always followed up by three Sent Ones to give instruction." So in any world, those who receive the spark, will also find three helpers ready to instruct them. The three are always there to supervise, and the evil spirits resent it. Here is a very interesting passage from the Ginza where the evil spirits say, "They claim this world for their own." They have been cast down here and this is theirs and they don't like people intruding. "These three men," they say, "are in the world. They are not really men. They are light and glory and they have come down to this little "Enoch", (This Adam. He's little Enoch now because he has taken on flesh and he's very susceptible to ills of the world) who is helpless and alone in the world. They are intruding in our world. The children of men have taken over the earth. They are really strangers who speak the language of the three men and they have accepted the teachings of the three men and rejected us in our own world and refused to acknowledge our kingdom and our glory." And thus, the evils ones plotted to overthrow Adam, who was hoping for the Savior, the teacher of Life, to come down later and teach him, give him aid and support.

"At the creation," says the Ginza, "God gave an order that the angel should come and keep Adam company." And at the beginning, it was the Lord himself and two companions who instructed Adam and Eve in everything. "When Adam was placed on the earth, three Uthras were sent to oversee him with myself at their head. I taught Adam and Eve the hymns and the order of prayer and the Masagases (that is the Mounting Up or Returning to Heaven) and the pattern of the universe." "In sending three," God said to the Pure Sent One, "go call Adam and Eve and all of their descendents and teach them concerning everything about the kingdom of Light and the worlds of Light. Be friendly with Adam and keep him company, you and the two angels that will be with you, and warn them against Satan." That's the Berlin Papyrus. Another one says, "Also teach them chastity."

We read of another team of three when Adam called upon God, the Great Spirit sent him from the land of greatness, the three who belonged to the twelve who were hidden in the veil of light (and those were later Peter, James, and John). Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael and all the angels come down. "I will come and my Father and Michael," he says, "and we are the great three who have visited the earth." Well, they are also matched by the three violent ones and the watchers.

This implies, of course, preexistence. Adam coming down here is a theme you find everywhere now. Throughout early Christian literature, in fact, going to heaven is constantly being described as a return to an old home. That's the way the present folk describe it. They describe this world as man is an outcast in this world and yearning for his home. Well, if he was created here, and this was the only world he ever knew, that wouldn't be his position at all. He would not be an outcast, he would not be a stranger. He'd be in his own world. The implication of preexistence is very strong in that but in these writings they talk about it all the time. In the James, for example, the Lord tells the Apostles, "They will ask you where are you going." The answer, "To the place from which I came. I return to that place." And the elect are those

individuals, according to the Gospel of Thomas, who shall find the kingdom because they came from it in the first place. The Gospel of Truth dwells at length on the theme of the return. "Whoever has this knowledge is a being from on high. When he is called, he hears and answers and turns towards him who calls him and re-ascends to him. He knows what he is called, he knows whence he has come and where he is going. He has turned many from error and preceded them to the places that belong to them but from which they have strayed. Joy to the man who has rediscovered himself and has awakened and helped others to wake up." Just so, Adam is received by a happy family on his return in the great old song book.

On the other side, they have awaited him in high expectation, the return of the first man with news from him. They eagerly await news of his victory, of the success of his mission and they want to hear it from his own lips when he returns. On his part, Adam, being away from home, asks a Newsbearer of the Sky, as he is called "How is my Father, the Father of Light? How is my Mother, the mother of the living whom I left, and her brethren also? Rejoice with me, ye holy ones, for I have returned to my original glory again." And again, in leaving the earth, he says, "My hour has come. They summon me. I will go from your midst and return to my true home." Accordingly, "The Sent One comes to take the soul of Adam back to the great first house of his Father to the place where he formerly lived." And so his children admonish, "Arise, old soul, return to your original home, to the place from which you were planted. Put on your garment of glory. Sit down upon your throne. Dwell in the dwellings among the Uthras, thy brethren." And again, "Now arise and return to the place of thy true family." "I came from the house of my Father," says the Psalm of Thomas, "in a far land, and I shall mount up until I return to that land of the pure." There is a moving scene at the end of The Pearl, the most moving of all the early Christian Syriac writings, where the hero finally returns to his home. His mission accomplished. He's met at the gate of greeting and honor by his entire family and he bows and worships his father and the Christ of the Father, "who has sent me the garments and gave me the orders while I was on the earth." All the princes of the house were gathered at the gate. They embraced him with tears of joy as the organ plays and they all walk back to the house together.

And Gregor of Nicean, one of the three great Cappadocians, writing about this, says that in his time, the fourth century, the Church was very confused about these teachings. They were being rapidly lost. He says, "Christians are all confused about the preexistence. Some say we lived in families there, and in tribes just as we do here, and that we lost our wings when came down here and we'll get them back again upon earth." So they mix up tenable and untenable things, and all sorts of strange ideas get in the picture. Regardless of what the true picture is, we know that the early Christians did believe very strongly in the preexistence. The mysterious word "propators" they used a lot is now recognized as not meaning the Father that was before our Heavenly Father but it means our Heavenly Father as our forefather, our propator, "the father of our preexistent spirit" says a quotation from a newly found work. "When they ask you who you are," says the James, "say 'I am a son and I come from the Father.' And when they ask you what sort of son and from what father answer 'From the preexistent Father and I am a son of the Preexistence.'" "The spirit existed before the flesh," says a psalm. Commenting on the teaching of this doctrine, the Clementine recognition, the editors note that various fathers of the Church representing every interpretation of the doctrine, from absolute acceptance to absolute denial, that most of the fathers temporized somewhere in between. Again a plain indication that we are dealing with an authentic teaching of the early Church since the early fathers are all for it. The

later ones don't know; they are not so sure.

"The earth had already passed away," here's one of these new writings, "and the Son had already had glory before this earth was ever created, reminding us that because we do not know them that doesn't mean that other times and worlds have not existed and do not now exist. From the Apocalypse of Abraham, "Before the worlds were I was a strong god who once created the light of the world." And he tells Abraham how "I explained my will to those who stood before me in this form that I am showing you in the spirit world before they came into existence." So Abraham here is shown the council in heaven in the spirit world in the preexistence. And it is plain enough what it means by "coming into existence" here.

Man's premortal existence was an illustrious one. There are descriptions of the glory we enjoyed before we came here, and then, along with all these writings they include a good deal about ordinances. We can't talk too much about them, not be too specific about them. We have talked in the Manti Temple, given a number of talks based on these, on temple ordinances, but certain things in general they talk about. The extreme importance of Adam as Michael. They have a lot to say about Adam as Michael. And Adam is aroused by the three Sent Ones. These ordinances are vital. They are not mere forms or symbols, we are told. They are analogs. Standing with the Apostles in the Prayer Circle, the Lord tells them, "I will teach you all the ordinances necessary that you may be purged by degrees and progress in the next life. These things make it possible for you to achieve other exaltation but they must be performed in this life. Unless ones performs them here, one cannot become a Son of Light" since the sons of light are by very definition those who are perfect in the ordinances. Throughout all these writings, no matter where they come from, whatever part of the Old World they come from, they always use this code word "Sons of Light". Nobody knew what it meant until now. We know what it means. It means "those who have received all the ordinances". Temple ordinances are what they are. And this is the way it is explained in Second Jehu also, "Since the sons of light are by very definition those who are perfect in the ordinances". It is interesting this same definition applies to the once mysterious title of Nazarean, which means the same thing.

"Until Christ came," says the Pistis Sophia, "no soul had gone through the ordinances in their completeness. It was He who opened the gate and the way of light. Those who receive these ordinances are the dispensations of the Sons of Light. And they receive whatever they desire. They are those who are upon the right hand for it is by their faithfulness in these very things that they show that they are worthy to return and inherit the kingdom. Without the ordinances, therefore, there is no foothold or foundation or anything in this life." In First Yeoul 86, "If you want to go to the Father, you must pass through the Veil." Recently I collected all the references available then. I have twice as many now of the forty day mission of Christ. Whenever you find a very early Christian text it almost always has the title of what the secret teachings of the Lord to the Apostles during the forty days. And I got them all together to see what they had in common. They all had four things in common. (This study was published in Holland. The Dutch were in charge of all this stuff because the French and Germans were in trouble with Egyptians and they couldn't get it. They trusted us and they edited it in this particular journal and this is where it was published. But I found in about fifty Coptic texts that were available to me then, there were four things that they all had in common.) The first was secrets, what the Lord taught the Apostles after the forty days. When he came after the resurrection, he came and visited them and taught



them. This was the really important thing, we're told. They didn't understand anything until that but we are not told a word of what he taught them. Why not? It was secret. Because the second point is that they all asked the Lord, "What's going to happen to us? What's going to happen to the Church?" And he says, it's going to be on earth for two generations. These things are not going to be handed down. They are to be buried. They are to be kept secret. They are not to be passed down. So we didn't get them. We are finding them now, you see.

The third thing was he taught the strange doctrines that the Christian world did not like at all, these things that we have been talking about: other worlds, things like that. That was out of the question because that wasn't Aristotle. And the fourth was the main thing he came to do. What the Lord came to do after the resurrection, what he taught them, according to all these documents that we went through, he took them to the Temple, he taught them the Temple ordinances. Just the Apostles and the general authorities, the Seventies, were instructed in these things. These things were handed down. They were not divulged to the public. They were very carefully kept from the public, but we have these ordinances now as they are described here, and this I have talked about in the Temple elsewhere. But this is the sort of thing they are talking about now. We are just mentioning here generalities, the importance of these documents, and what they mean they mean to these people. The person who receives these become a son. He both gives and receives, (that is what a son does, a son becomes a father) the signs and the tokens of God of Truth while demonstrating the same to the Church. All in the hopes that these ordinances may some day become realities. Remember, they are only forms, they are only types but they must be performed here. It is the same thing in school. If you take a good course in math, you say that these are just symbols that you are doing, you are dealing with things in the calculus which are very abstract or you are dealing with square roots of minus one, and things like, but you have to do them. But this isn't the real thing. Some day you will know what's behind it. All in the hope that these things may some day become reality. "They may be mere symbols," says the Pistus Sophia, "but they are an indispensable step to the attainment of real power. Without the mysteries, one loses ones power. Without the ordinances, one has no way of controlling matter. For such control begins with control of oneself. The ordinances provide the means and the discipline by which light operates on material things." They are meant for instruction, they are meant for practice, and they are meant as a test of obedience. "Your level in the next world will depend on the ordinances you have received in this world and whoever receives the highest ordinances here will understand the whys and wherefores of the great plan. You cannot hope to understand it all here. It is through the ordinances that one makes progress in knowledge. For that those who receive all the available ordinances and teachings here, shall pass by all intermediate places and not have to give answers, signs, and stand certain sets hereafter. "John the Baptist," another writing says, "who performed with which he was entrusted, foretold in a special language that Christ would bring the ordinances of a higher priesthood as he had brought the ordinances of the lower." And indeed it was the Lord who, during the Forty Days, revealed these ordinances to the Apostles.

There is much more to that affect. In most of our sources, the Lord gives a complete summary of all the rites, after explaining them to the Apostles, after it's all over, explanation of their meaning as they stand in the Prayer Circle. This is mentioned in many writings and the early fathers of the Church were much perplexed. This was finally brought up in the Council of Ephesus, at the Second Council of Nicea, and they finally got rid of it because they couldn't

understand it, what it was all about. But in the Syriac Church, they kept the rite down until the second century. We have a writing, a very valuable one, edit by Rafmani some years ago which was long considered the most valuable of all writings from the early Syriac Church, called the Testament of Jesu Cristi. And we mention it here because he talks about the Prayer Circle and how the Saints in the Syriac Church used to perform it. In the Pistis Sophia, at the end of the teachings and performing of the ordinances, the Lord orders the Apostles and their wives (this is interesting, this is one of the reasons that four of these texts it specifically mentions their wives being present and they had to be in this particular circle) to form a circle. He stands at an altar on one side and there they recapitulate all the ordinances. The Savior opens with a prayer which is given in code. This opening prayer is always given in some code. The words aren't always the same, they are different. And in this one he says, "I ai oh ah oh i oh i ah." Now, this is special code in Coptic. They write lots of code in Coptic, and it is not as confusing as you think. But this is to make sure that it is kept secret from the world. This is explained as meaning as "Hear me, Father." In First Jehu, the Lord calls on the Father with different words, also cryptic. He says, "Ie, ie, ie." We are told that in every world, in every level, every taxis, there are twelve who officiate under the direction of three and they always form a circle, without a lower and a higher because there is no head of the table in a circle. There is no sense of rank whatever. And there they are instructed in all things.

It was to such a circle, the First Jehu tells us, that God said in the beginning, "These I will make my rulers," at the creation of the world. Abraham was standing in that circle. (There is your book of Abraham. "These I will make my rulers. Abraham, though art one of them.") But it says specifically here they were standing in a circle of twelve and the Lord addressed them that way and said they were the ones who would be his rulers on earth. The Apostles, in other words, were appointed in the preexistence.

Before forming the circle, the twelve sing a hymn. But when it is formed, the ordinances are pronounced, the Lord recites and then they recite after him. In most of the cases they say "Amen" and in some they simply repeat his words. In the Second Jehu, "The Apostles and their wives all form a circle standing around the Lord who says that he will lead them through all the ordinances of eternal progression. Clothed in their holy garments they form a circle, foot to foot, arm resting on arm. Jesus, as Adam, takes the lead and all the others say "Amen" to each phrase of the prayer." In the recently found Cathara Wiss Manuscript (this is one that interests me particularly because I got the first photographs of it) "'And you shall recite after me' and so we made a circle and surrounded Him and he said, 'I am in your midst in the manner of a little child,' and then He says, 'After everything I say you shall say Amen after me.'" "Gather to me, O Holy members of my body, when I recite the hymn do ye say 'Amen'?" There it breaks off, unfortunately.

This tradition is recalled a number of times in the earliest Christian literature. Here is the Acts of John where it says, "Now, before he was taken by the lawless Jews, He gathered us all together and said, 'Before I am delivered up to them, let us sing a hymn unto the Father,' so He commanded us to make as it were a ring, holding each others hands, himself standing in the middle. And He said, 'Respond Amen to me,' and then He began to sing a hymn, 'Glory to Thee, Father,' and we, standing about in a ring said 'Amen'." The phrases which the Apostles then pronounced "Amen", "We praise Thee, O Father," "We give thanks to Thee," "I would be saved

and I would save," they said "Amen". "I would be loosed and I would loose," "Amen," "I would be a Savior." "I would be pierced and I would pierce," and He gave them the sign. "I would be born and I would bear," and so forth.

One is reminded of a statement in the Philippi, "Before one can give, one must receive." Another text adds, "I would wash myself and I would wash others." "I have no temple, and I have temples." Then the Lords commends, "Now see thyself in me who speaks, and when thou hast seen what I do, keep silence about my mysteries. You must see me as I suffer and what I suffer. Who am I? Thou shalt know when I go away." "Know thou suffering, and thou shalt have no power to suffer," He tells them. "That which thou knowest, I myself will teach thee." The Prayer Ring is mentioned not only in the Acts of Petrius Simon, but also in Irenaeus, in St. Augustine, in Potius, in First and Second Jehu, in the Testament of our Lord and Savior, in the Second Coptic Gnostic work, in the Pistis Sophia, and various councils of the Church. St. Augustine, in reporting the episode of the Prayer Circle, says the whole thing was always kept most secret by the early Christians. And Epiphanius says the second council of Nicea reported on it and included it among the lists of blessings handed down in the early Church. But they finally gave it up because they couldn't understand what it was all about, and it was never used again.

Following this pattern, in the early Syriac Church, the bishop takes the place here at the altar. And he first addresses the people in the circle and he says, "If anyone has any ill feelings against his neighbor, let him be reconciled. If any feels himself unworthy, let him withdraw, for God is witness of these ordinances, and the Son, and the Angels." Because before God, and the visiting or witnessing angels are witnessing these things, so withdraw.

And in the Bartholomew, there is some very interesting and personal stuff, some of this new stuff has to do with Mary, we've been finding, and it is not the miraculous Mary literature in which the chariots of fire and that sort of thing happens. This is very homey, very natural. They were having this prayer circle one day and Mary asked if she might speak a few words. She goes over to the altar and some of the Apostles don't like it. They say she doesn't have authority, she's a woman, should we allow her to speak here? But she says, "I have something I want to tell you, something that happened in the temple," because this is the proper occasion for it. Having finished the prayer, Bartholomew says, "she began by calling upon God with upraised hands, speaking three times in an unknown language," there's the usual code introducing the prayer. Then it says, "Having finished the prayer, she asked them all to sit on the ground." She asked Peter to support on her right hand and she asked Andrew to support her on left hand. And then she tells that just before the birth of Christ, the veil was rent in the Temple. That was on the occasion when she saw an angel in the Temple at the veil. He took her by the right hand, after she had been washed and anointed, wiped off and clothed with the garment, and she was hailed by him as a blessed vessel, "and he took me by the right hand and there was bread on the altar in the Temple and he took some and ate it and gave some to me. And we drank wine together." They had the sacrament. "And I saw that the bread and wine had not diminished." (Same thing happened in the Book of Mormon when they had the sacrament.) All this was in the temple. At this point, the Lord himself appeared and forbade the angel to tell her any more since all the creation has been completed this day.

The Apocalypse of Abraham says the same thing. "Abraham went with the Lord and

fasted for forty days and God took him to Mt. Horeb and there was an altar but no offering." But He provided it miraculously, as He does elsewhere. He had sacramental meals with his followers, and then the followers were ordered to stand in a ring and be instructed by Abraham in the proper manner of sacrifice under the old covenant. So under very much the same circumstances, he has them standing in a ring and he instructs them there, but we cannot go into that now.

Q: In reference to the creation of the world and saviors for each of them, one of the early presidents of the Church indicated, your records reveal, that there is a savior for each world. One of the presidency of the Church recently indicated that Christ is the savior for many worlds. How do you reconcile that? What do the scriptures or records reveal?

A: Well, here, of course, we've been talking a lot about that, that there is room for everybody is the main idea. It is a much vaster thing than we had ever imagined before. What is this doctrine's identity? This is the most interesting thing here. This is a whole subject of identity. They use this expression a great deal. You comprehend what you are like, don't you? In other words, you identify. We are told time and again that when Jesus came down here He took flesh so that we can comprehend Him. He became like us. With an angel He was an angel. "Among the angels He was an angel. Among man He was a man." He descends to the level of the people whom He must teach because He must do it in order to teach them. Because of this principle that you comprehend what you are like, and comprehension means a lot. You comprehend only to the degree which you are like. It is in you. There is one way it is put, "Here, while we are on this earth, we are in ourselves and the world lies around us outside." We don't know, it's a great mystery. It still is, not only psychological but scientific and everything else. We don't know how it is that we comprehend what's outside, how it's brought to us, how it's transmitted, how it gets inside our heads. It's in there, you see, whatever it is we are comprehending because we are not seeing it in there, we are seeing it out there. "In other worlds it is not like that." You are not comprehending, acting individual, comprehending an object out here. By comprehending it you embrace it. It is part of you. You identify with it completely. And this means that life will look very different there. This is how you can identify with animals. This is why it would be unfair to have lower creatures. How can they have joy in their sphere in which they were created if they have been deprived of our type of glory? They aren't missing anything at all because we're sharing this common existence. The man comprehends a great deal more in the love of his dog, and the other way around. If there is that feeling between them, neither feels jilted. Neither feels that he is being left out of anything because they are actually sharing in each other's worlds. This is the point.

This is an extreme case. You can say a man had a very intelligent dog of which he was very fond and the dog was very fond of the man, they actually share among themselves a very real experience so that neither has to envy the other at all. You can heighten this very greatly with our Heavenly Father and ourselves. We are not missing anything. We don't feel jilted by being so far below Him. We haven't missed a thing. It's just so lovely to be near Him. Because He's trying to pull us up to Him. He wants us to be like Him. And we can't desire anything greater than that, so there is none of this dominance or submissive business, He's not putting himself in charge. We are drawn toward Him and He wants us to be drawn.

