

# **The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5**

Hippolytus



## Table of Contents

<b>The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5</b> .....	1
<u>Hippolytus</u> .....	2
<b>BOOK V</b> .....	4
<u>CHAP. I.—RECAPITULATION; CHARACTERISTICS OF HERESY; ORIGIN OF THE NAME NAASSENI; THE SYSTEM OF THE NAASSENI</u> .....	5
<u>CHAP. II.—NAASSENI ASCRIBE THEIR SYSTEM, THROUGH MARIAMNE, TO JAMES THE LORD'S BROTHER; REALLY TRACEABLE TO THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES; THEIR PSYCHOLOGY AS GIVEN IN THE "GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS;" ASSYRIAN THEORY OF THE SOUL; THE SYSTEMS OF THE NAASSENI AND THE ASSYRIANS COMPARED; SUPPORT DRAWN BY THE NAASSENI FROM THE PHRYGIAN AND EGYPTIAN MYSTERIES; THE MYSTERIES OF ISIS; THESE MYSTERIES ALLEGORIZED BY THE NAASSENI</u> .....	6
<u>CHAP. III.—FURTHER EXPOSITION OF THE HERESY OF THE NAASSENI; PROFESS TO FOLLOW HOMER; ACKNOWLEDGE A TRIAD OF PRINCIPLES; THEIR TECHNICAL NAMES OF THE TRIAD; SUPPORT THESE ON THE AUTHORITY OF GREEK POETS; ALLEGORIZE OUR SAVIOUR'S MIRACLES; THE MYSTERY OF THE SAMOTHRACIANS; WHY THE LORD CHOSE TWELVE DISCIPLES; THE NAME CORYBAS, USED BY THRACIANS AND PHRYGIANS, EXPLAINED; NAASSENI PROFESS TO FIND THEIR SYSTEM IN SCRIPTURE; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF JACOB'S VISION; THEIR IDEA OF THE "PERFECT MAN;" THE "PERFECT MAN" CALLED "PAPA" BY THE PHRYGIANS; THE NAASSENI AND PHRYGIANS ON THE RESURRECTION; THE ECSTASIS OF ST. PAUL; THE MYSTERIES OF RELIGION AS ALLUDED TO BY CHRIST; INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER; ALLEGORY OF THE PROMISED LAND; COMPARISON OF THE SYSTEM OF THE PHRYGIANS WITH THE STATEMENTS OF SCRIPTURE; EXPOSITION OF THE MEANING OF THE HIGHER AND LOWER ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES; THE INCARNATION DISCOVERABLE HERE ACCORDING TO THE NAASSENI</u> .....	10
<u>CHAP. IV.—FURTHER USE MADE OF THE SYSTEM OF THE PHRYGIANS; MODE OF CELEBRATING THE MYSTERIES; THE MYSTERY OF THE "GREAT MOTHER;" THESE MYSTERIES HAVE A JOINT OBJECT OF WORSHIP WITH THE NAASSENI; THE NAASSENI ALLEGORIZE THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN; THE ALLEGORY APPLIED TO THE LIFE OF JESUS</u> .....	15
<u>CHAP. V.—EXPLANATION OF THE SYSTEM OF THE NAASSENI TAKEN FROM ONE OF THEIR HYMNS</u> .....	17
<u>CHAP. VI.—THE OPHITES THE GRAND SOURCE OF HERESY</u> .....	18
<u>CHAP. VII.—THE SYSTEM OF THE PERATAE; THEIR TRITHEISM; EXPLANATION OF THE INCARNATION</u> .....	19
<u>CHAP. VIII.—THE PERATAE DERIVE THEIR SYSTEM FROM THE ASTROLOGERS; THIS PROVED BY A STATEMENT OF THE ASTROLOGICAL THEORIES OF THE ZODIAC; HENCE THE TERMINOLOGY OF THE PERATIC HERETICS</u> .....	20
<u>CHAP. IX.—SYSTEM OF THE PERATAE EXPLAINED OUT OF ONE OF THEIR OWN BOOKS</u> .....	22
<u>CHAP. X.—THE PERATIC HERESY NOMINALLY DIFFERENT FROM ASTROLOGY, BUT REALLY THE SAME SYSTEM ALLEGORIZED</u> .....	23
<u>CHAP. XI.—WHY THEY CALL THEMSELVES PERATAE; THEIR THEORY OF GENERATION SUPPORTED BY AN APPEAL TO ANTIQUITY; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE EXODUS OF ISRAEL; THEIR SYSTEM OF "THE SERPENT;" DEDUCED BY THEM FROM SCRIPTURE; THIS THE REAL IMPORT OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE</u>	

## Table of Contents

### The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

<u>ASTROLOGERS</u> .....	24
<u>CHAP. XII.—COMPENDIOUS STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE PERATAE</u> .....	26
<u>CHAP. XIII.—THE PERATIC HERESY NOT GENERALLY KNOWN</u> .....	28
<u>CHAP. XIV.—THE SYSTEM OF THE SETHIANS; THEIR TRIAD OF INFINITE PRINCIPLES; THEIR HERESY EXPLAINED; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE INCARNATION</u> .....	29
<u>CHAP. XV.—THE SETHIANS SUPPORT THEIR DOCTRINES BY AN ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE; THEIR SYSTEM REALLY DERIVED FROM NATURAL PHILOSOPHERS AND FROM THE ORPHIC RITES; ADOPT THE HOMERIC COSMOGONY</u> .....	31
<u>CHAP. XVI.—THE SETHIAN THEORY CONCERNING "MIXTURE" AND "COMPOSITION;" APPLICATION OF IT TO CHRIST; ILLUSTRATION FROM THE WELL OF AMPA</u> .....	33
<u>CHAP. XVII.—THE SETHIAN DOCTRINES TO BE LEARNED FROM THE "PARAPHRASE OF SETH"</u> .....	34
<u>CHAP. XVIII.—THE SYSTEM OF JUSTINUS ANTISCRIPURAL AND ESSENTIALLY PAGAN</u> .....	35
<u>CHAP. XIX.—THE JUSTINIAN HERESY UNFOLDED IN THE "BOOK OF BARUCH"</u> .....	36
<u>CHAP. XX.—THE COSMOGONY OF JUSTINUS AN ALLEGORICAL EXPLANATION OF HERODOTUS' LEGEND OF HERCULES</u> .....	37
<u>CHAP. XXI.—JUSTINUS' TRIAD OF PRINCIPLES; HIS ANGELOGRAPHY FOUNDED ON THIS TRIAD; HIS EXPLANATION OF THE BIRTH, LIFE, AND DEATH OF OUR LORD</u> .....	38
<u>CHAP. XXII.—OATH USED BY THE JUSTINIAN HERETICS; THE BOOK OF BARUCH; THE REPERTORY OF THEIR SYSTEM</u> .....	41
<u>CHAP. XXIII.—SUBSEQUENT HERESIES DEDUCIBLE FROM THE SYSTEM OF JUSTINUS</u> .....	42

# **The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5**

## Hippolytus

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- BOOK V.

- CHAP. I.—RECAPITULATION; CHARACTERISTICS OF HERESY; ORIGIN OF THE NAME NAASSENI; THE SYSTEM OF THE NAASSENI.
- CHAP. II.—NAASSENI ASCRIBE THEIR SYSTEM, THROUGH MARIAMNE, TO JAMES THE LORD'S BROTHER; REALLY TRACEABLE TO THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES; THEIR PSYCHOLOGY AS GIVEN IN THE "GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS;" ASSYRIAN THEORY OF THE SOUL; THE SYSTEMS OF THE NAASSENI AND THE ASSYRIANS COMPARED; SUPPORT DRAWN BY THE NAASSENI FROM THE PHRYGIAN AND EGYPTIAN MYSTERIES; THE MYSTERIES OF ISIS; THESE MYSTERIES ALLEGORIZED BY THE NAASSENI.
- CHAP. III.—FURTHER EXPOSITION OF THE HERESY OF THE NAASSENI; PROFESS TO FOLLOW HOMER; ACKNOWLEDGE A TRIAD OF PRINCIPLES; THEIR TECHNICAL NAMES OF THE TRIAD; SUPPORT THESE ON THE AUTHORITY OF GREEK POETS; ALLEGORIZE OUR SAVIOUR'S MIRACLES; THE MYSTERY OF THE SAMOTHRACIANS; WHY THE LORD CHOSE TWELVE DISCIPLES; THE NAME CORYBAS, USED BY THRACIANS AND PHRYGIANS, EXPLAINED; NAASSENI PROFESS TO FIND THEIR SYSTEM IN SCRIPTURE; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF JACOB'S VISION; THEIR IDEA OF THE "PERFECT MAN;" THE "PERFECT MAN" CALLED "PAPA" BY THE PHRYGIANS; THE NAASSENI AND PHRYGIANS ON THE RESURRECTION; THE ECSTASIS OF ST. PAUL; THE MYSTERIES OF RELIGION AS ALLUDED TO BY CHRIST; INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER; ALLEGORY OF THE PROMISED LAND; COMPARISON OF THE SYSTEM OF THE PHRYGIANS WITH THE STATEMENTS OF SCRIPTURE; EXPOSITION OF THE MEANING OF THE HIGHER AND LOWER ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES; THE INCARNATION DISCOVERABLE HERE ACCORDING TO THE NAASSENI.
- CHAP. IV.—FURTHER USE MADE OF THE SYSTEM OF THE PHRYGIANS; MODE OF CELEBRATING THE MYSTERIES; THE MYSTERY OF THE "GREAT MOTHER;" THESE MYSTERIES HAVE A JOINT OBJECT OF WORSHIP WITH THE NAASSENI; THE NAASSENI ALLEGORIZE THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN; THE ALLEGORY APPLIED TO THE LIFE OF JESUS.
- CHAP. V.—EXPLANATION OF THE SYSTEM OF THE NAASSENI TAKEN FROM ONE OF THEIR HYMNS.
- CHAP. VI.—THE OPHITES THE GRAND SOURCE OF HERESY.
- CHAP. VII.—THE SYSTEM OF THE PERATAE; THEIR TRITHEISM; EXPLANATION OF THE INCARNATION.
- CHAP. VIII.—THE PERATAE DERIVE THEIR SYSTEM FROM THE ASTROLOGERS; THIS PROVED BY A STATEMENT OF THE ASTROLOGICAL THEORIES OF THE ZODIAC; HENCE THE TERMINOLOGY OF THE PERATIC HERETICS.
- CHAP. IX.—SYSTEM OF THE PERATAE EXPLAINED OUT OF ONE OF THEIR OWN BOOKS.
- CHAP. X.—THE PERATIC HERESY NOMINALLY DIFFERENT FROM ASTROLOGY, BUT REALLY THE SAME SYSTEM ALLEGORIZED.
- CHAP. XI.—WHY THEY CALL THEMSELVES PERATAE; THEIR THEORY OF GENERATION SUPPORTED BY AN APPEAL TO ANTIQUITY; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE EXODUS OF ISRAEL; THEIR SYSTEM OF "THE SERPENT;" DEDUCED BY THEM FROM SCRIPTURE; THIS THE REAL IMPORT OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE ASTROLOGERS.

The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

- CHAP. XII.—COMPENDIOUS STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE PERATAE.
- CHAP. XIII.—THE PERATIC HERESY NOT GENERALLY KNOWN.
- CHAP. XIV.—THE SYSTEM OF THE SETHIANS; THEIR TRIAD OF INFINITE PRINCIPLES; THEIR HERESY EXPLAINED; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE INCARNATION.
- CHAP. XV.—THE SETHIANS SUPPORT THEIR DOCTRINES BY AN ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE; THEIR SYSTEM REALLY DERIVED FROM NATURAL PHILOSOPHERS AND FROM THE ORPHIC RITES; ADOPT THE HOMERIC COSMOGONY.
- CHAP. XVI.—THE SETHIAN THEORY CONCERNING "MIXTURE" AND "COMPOSITION;" APPLICATION OF IT TO CHRIST; ILLUSTRATION FROM THE WELL OF AMPA.
- CHAP. XVII.—THE SETHIAN DOCTRINES TO BE LEARNED FROM THE "PARAPHRASE OF SETH."
- CHAP. XVIII.—THE SYSTEM OF JUSTINUS ANTISCRIPITURAL AND ESSENTIALLY PAGAN.
- CHAP. XIX.—THE JUSTINIAN HERESY UNFOLDED IN THE "BOOK OF BARUCH."
- CHAP. XX.—THE COSMOGONY OF JUSTINUS AN ALLEGORICAL EXPLANATION OF HERODOTUS' LEGEND OF HERCULES.
- CHAP. XXI.—JUSTINUS' TRIAD OF PRINCIPLES; HIS ANGELOGRAPHY FOUNDED ON THIS TRIAD; HIS EXPLANATION OF THE BIRTH, LIFE, AND DEATH OF OUR LORD.
- CHAP. XXII.—OATH USED BY THE JUSTINIAN HERETICS; THE BOOK OF BARUCH; THE REPERTORY OF THEIR SYSTEM.
- CHAP. XXIII.—SUBSEQUENT HERESIES DEDUCIBLE FROM THE SYSTEM OF JUSTINUS.

## BOOK V.

### CONTENTS.

The following are the contents of the fifth book of the Refutation of all Heresies:(1)—

What the assertions are of the Naasseni, who style themselves Gnostics, and that they advance those opinions which the Philosophers of the Greeks previously propounded, as well as those who have handed down mystical (rites), from (both of) whom the Naasseni taking occasion, have constructed their heresies.

And what are the tenets of the Perstae, and that their system is not framed by them out of the holy Scriptures, but from astrological art.

What is the doctrine of the Sethians,(2) and that, purloining(3) their theories from the wise men among the Greeks, they have patched together their own system out of shreds of opinion taken from Musaeus, and Linus, and Orpheus.

What are the tenets of Justinus, and that his system is framed By him, not out of the holy Scriptures, but from the detail of marvels furnished by Herodotus the historian.



## CHAP. I.—RECAPITULATION; CHARACTERISTICS OF HERESY; ORIGIN OF THE NAME NAASSENI; THE SYSTEM OF THE NAASSENI.

I think that in the four preceding books I have very elaborately explained the opinions propounded by all the speculators among both Greeks and Barbarians, respecting the Divine Nature and the creation of the world; and not even have I omitted(4) the consideration of their systems of magic. So that I have for my readers undergone no ordinary amount of toil, in my anxiety to urge many forward into a desire of

learning, and into steadfastness of knowledge in regard of the truth. It remains, therefore, to hasten on to the refutation of the heresies; but it is for the purpose of furnishing this (refutation) that we have put forward the statements already made by us. For from philosophers the heresiarchs deriving(5) starting-points, (and) like cobblers patching together, according to their own particular interpretation, the blunders of the ancients, have advanced them as novelties to those that are capable of being deceived, as we shall prove in the following books. In the remainder (of our work), the opportunity invites us to approach the treatment of our proposed subjects, and to begin from those who have presumed to celebrate a serpent,(6) the originator of the error (in question), through certain expressions devised by the energy of his own (ingenuity). The priests, then, and champions of the system, have been first those who have been called Naasseni,(7) being so denominated from the Hebrew language, for the serpent is called naas(8) (in Hebrew). Subsequently, however, they have styled themselves Gnostics, alleging that they alone have sounded the depths of knowledge. Now, from the system of these (speculators), many, detaching parts, have constructed a heresy which, though with several subdivisions, is essentially one, and they explain precisely the same (tenets); though conveyed under the guise of different opinions, as the following discussion, according as it progresses, will prove. These (Naasseni), then, according to the system(1) advanced by them, magnify, (as the originating cause) of all things else, a man and a son of man. And this man is a hermaphrodite, and is denominated among them Adam; and hymns many and various are made to him. The hymns? however—to be brief—are couched among them in some such form as this: "From thee (comes) father, and through thee (comes) mother, two names immortal, progenitors of Aeons, O denizen of heaven, thou illustrious man." But they divide him as Geryon(3) into three parts. For, say they, of this man one part is rational, another psychical, another earthly. And they suppose that the knowledge of him is the originating principle of the capacity for a knowledge of God, expressing themselves thus: "The originating principle of perfection is the knowledge(4) of man, while the knowledge of God is absolute perfection." All these qualities, however—rational, and psychical, and earthly—have, (the Naassene) says, retired and descended into one man simultaneously—Jesus,(5) who was born of Mary. And these three men (the Naassene) says, are in the habit of speaking (through Jesus) at the same time together, each from their own proper substances to those peculiarly their own. For, according to these, there are three kinds of all existent things—angelic, psychical, earthly; and there are three churches—angelic, psychical, earthly; and the names of these are elect, called, captive.

**CHAP. II.—NAASSENI ASCRIBE THEIR SYSTEM, THROUGH MARIAMNE, TO JAMES THE LORD'S BROTHER; REALLY TRACEABLE TO THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES; THEIR PSYCHOLOGY AS GIVEN IN THE "GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS;" ASSYRIAN THEORY OF THE SOUL; THE SYSTEMS OF THE NAASSENI AND THE ASSYRIANS COMPARED; SUPPORT DRAWN BY THE NAASSENI FROM THE PHRYGIAN AND EGYPTIAN MYSTERIES; THE MYSTERIES OF ISIS; THESE MYSTERIES ALLEGORIZED BY THE NAASSENI.**

These are the heads of very numerous discourses which (the Naassene) asserts James the brother of the Lord handed down to Mariamne.(6) In order, then, that these impious (heretics) may no longer belie Mariamne or James, or the Saviour Himself, let us come to the mystic rites (whence these have derived their figment),—to a consideration, if it seems right, of both the Barbarian and Grecian (mysteries),—and let us see how these (heretics), collecting together the secret and ineffable mysteries of all the Gentiles, are uttering falsehoods against Christ, and are making dupes of those who are not acquainted with these orgies of the Gentiles. For since the foundation of the doctrine with them is the man Adam, and they say that concerning him it has been written, "Who shall declare his generation?"(7) learn how, partly deriving from the Gentiles the undiscoverable and diversified(8) generation of the man, they fictitiously apply it to Christ.

"Now earth,"(9) say the Greeks, "gave forth a man, (earth) first bearing a goodly gift, wishing to become mother not of plants devoid of sense, nor beasts without reason, but of a gentle and highly favoured creature." "It, however, is difficult," (the Naassene) says, "to ascertain whether Alalcomeneus,(10) first of men, rose upon the Boeotians over Lake Cephisus; or whether it were the Idaean Curetes, a divine race; or the Phrygian Corybantes, whom first the sun beheld springing up after the manner of the growth of trees; or whether Arcadia brought forth Pelagus, of greater antiquity than the moon; or Eleusis (produced) Diaulus, an inhabitant of Raria; or Lemnus begot Cabirus, fair child of secret orgies; or Pallerie (brought forth) the Phlegraean Alcyoneus, oldest of the giants. But the Libyans affirm that Iarbas, first born, on emerging from arid plains, commenced eating the sweet acorn of Jupiter. But the Nile of the Egyptians," he says, "up to this day fertilizing mud, (and therefore) generating animals, renders up living bodies, which acquire flesh from moist vapour." The Assyrians, however, say that fish-eating Oannes(11) was (the first man, and) produced among themselves. The Chaldeans, however, say that this Adam is the man whom alone earth brought forth. And that he lay inanimate, unmoved, (and) still as a statue; being an image of him who is above, who is celebrated as the man Adam,(1) having been begotten by many powers, concerning whom individually is an enlarged discussion.

In order, therefore, that finally the Great Man from above may be overpowered, "from whom," as they say, "the whole family named on earth and in the heavens has been formed, to him was given also a soul, that through the soul he might suffer; and that the enslaved image may be punished of the Great and most Glorious and Perfect Man, for even so they call him. Again, then, they ask what is the soul, and whence, and what kind in its nature, that, coming to the man and moving him,(2) it should enslave and punish the image of the Perfect Man. They do not, however, (on this point) institute an inquiry from the Scriptures, but ask this (question) also from the mystic (rites). And they affirm that the soul is very difficult to discover, and hard to understand; for it does not remain in the same figure or the same form invariably, or in one passive condition, that either one could express it by a sign, or comprehend it substantially.

But they have these varied changes (of the soul) set down in the gospel inscribed "according to the Egyptians."(3) They are, then, in doubt, as all the rest of men among the Gentiles, whether (the soul) is at all from something pre-existent, or whether from the self-produced (one),(4) or from a widespread Chaos. And first they fly for refuge to the mysteries of the Assyrians, perceiving the threefold division of the man; for the Assyrians first advanced the opinion that the soul has three parts, and yet (is essentially) one. For of soul, say they, is every nature desirous, and each in a different manner. For soul is cause of all things made; all things that are nourished,

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

(the Naassene) says, and that grow, require soul. For it is not possible, he says, to obtain any nourishment or growth where soul is not present. For even stones, he affirms, are animated, for they possess what is capable of increase; but increase would not at any time take place without nourishment, for it is by accession that things which are being increased grow, but accession is the nourishment of things that are nurtured. Every nature, then, as of things celestial and (the Naasene) says, of things celestial, and earthly, and infernal, desires a soul. And an entity of this description the Assyrians call Adonis or Endymion;(5) and when it is styled Adonis, Venus, he says, loves and desires the soul when styled by such a name. But Venus is production, according to them. But whenever Proserpine or Cora becomes enamoured with Adonis, there results, he says, a certain mortal soul separated from Venus (that is, from generation). But should the Moon pass into concupiscence for Endymion, and into love of her form, the nature,(6) he says, of the higher beings requires a soul likewise. But if, he says, the mother of the gods emasculate Attis,(7) and herself has this (person) as an object of affection, the blessed nature, he says, of the supernal and everlasting (beings) alone recalls the male power of the soul to itself.

For (the Naassene) says, there is the hermaphrodite man. According to this account of theirs, the intercourse of woman with man is demonstrated, in conformity with such teaching, to be an exceedingly wicked and filthy (practice).(8) For, says (the Naassene), Attis has been emasculated, that is, he has passed over from the earthly parts of the nether world to the everlasting substance above, where, he says, there is neither female or male,(9) but a new creature, (10) a new man, which is hermaphrodite. As to where, however, they use the expression "above," I shall show when I come to the proper place (for treating this subject). But they assert that, by their account, they testify that Rhea is not absolutely isolated, but—for so I may say—the universal creature; and this they declare to be what is affirmed by the Word. "For the invisible things of Him are seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made by Him, even His eternal power and Godhead, for the purpose of leaving them without excuse. Wherefore, knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, nor gave Him thanks; but their foolish heart was rendered vain. For, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into images of the likeness of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore also God gave them up unto vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature." What, however, the natural use is, according to them, we shall afterwards declare. "And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly"—now the expression that which is unseemly signifies, according to these (Naasseni), the first and blessed substance, figureless, the cause of all figures to those things that are moulded into shapes,—and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."(1) For in these words which Paul has spoken they say the entire secret of theirs, and a hidden mystery of blessed pleasure, are comprised. For the promise of washing is not any other, according to them, than the introduction of him that is washed in, according to them, life-giving water, and anointed with ineffable(2) ointment (than his introduction) into unfading bliss

But they assert that not only is there in favour of their doctrine, testimony to be drawn from the mysteries of the Assyrians, but also from those of the Phrygians concerning the happy nature—concealed, and yet at the same time disclosed—of things that have been, and are coming into existence, and moreover will be,—(a happy nature) which, (the Naassene) says, is the kingdom of heaven to be sought for within a man.(3) And concerning this (nature) they hand down an explicit passage, occurring(4) in the Gospel inscribed according to Thomas,(5) expressing themselves thus: "He who seeks me, will find, me in children from seven years old; for there concealed, I shall in the fourteenth age be made manifest." This, however, is not (the teaching) of Christ, but of Hippocrates, who uses these words: "A child of seven years is half of a father." And so it is that these (heretics), placing the originative nature of the universe in causative seed, (and) having ascertained the (aphorism) of Hippocrates,(6) that a child of seven years old is half of a father, say that in fourteen years, according to Thomas, he is manifested. This, with them, is the ineffable and mystical Logos. They assert, then, that the Egyptians, who after the Phrygians,(7) it is established, are of greater antiquity than all mankind, and who confessedly were the first to proclaim to

all the rest of men the rites and orgies of, at the same time, all the gods, as well as the species and energies (of things), have the sacred and august, and for those who are not initiated, unspeakable mysteries of Isis. These, however, are not anything else than what by her of the seven dresses and sable robe was sought and snatched away, namely, the pudendum of Osiris. And they say that Osiris is water.(8) But the seven-robed nature,

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

encircled and arrayed with seven mantles of ethereal texture—for so they call the planetary stars, allegorizing and denominating them ethereal(9) robes,—is as it were the changeable generation, and is exhibited as the creature transformed by the ineffable and unportrayable,(10) and inconceivable and figureless one. And this, (the Naassene) says, is what is declared in Scripture, "The just will fall seven times, and rise again."(11) For these falls, he says, are the changes of the stars, moved by Him who puts all things in motion.

They affirm, then, concerning the substance(12) of the seed which is a cause of all existent things, that it is none of these, but that it produces and forms all things that are made, expressing themselves thus: "I become what I wish, and I am what I am: on account of this I say, that what puts all things in motion is itself unmoved. For what exists remains forming all things, and nought of existing things is made."(13) He says that this (one) alone is good, and that what is spoken by the Saviour(14) is declared concerning this (one): "Why do you say that am good? One is good, my Father which is in the heavens, who causeth His sun to rise upon the just and unjust, and sendeth rain upon saints and sinners."(15) But who the saintly ones are on whom He sends the rain, and the sinners on whom the same sends the rain, this likewise we shall afterwards declare with the rest. And this is the great and secret and unknown mystery of the universe, concealed and revealed among the Egyptians. For Osiris,(16) (the Naassene) says, is in temples in front of Isis;(17) and his pudendum stands exposed, looking downwards, and crowned with all its own fruits of things that are made. And (he affirms) that such stands not only in the most hallowed temples chief of idols, but that also, for the information of all, it is as it were a light not set under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, proclaiming its message upon the housetops,(18) in all by- ways, and all streets, and near the actual dwellings, placed in front as a certain appointed limit and termination of the dwelling, and that this is denominated the good (entity) by all. For they style this good-producing, not knowing what they say. And the Greeks, deriving this mystical (expression) from the Egyptians, preserve it until this day. For we behold, says (the Naassene), statues of Mercury, of such a figure honoured among them.

Worshipping, however, Cyllenius with especial distinction, they style him Logios. For Mercury is Logos, who being interpreter and fabricator of the things that have been made simultaneously, and that are being produced, and that will exist, stands honoured among them, fashioned into some such figure as is the pullendum of a man, having an impulsive power from the parts below towards those above. And that this (deity)—that is, a Mercury of this description—is, (the Naassene) says, a conjurer of the dead, and a guide of departed spirits, and an originator of souls; nor does this escape the notice of the poets, who express themselves thus:—

"Cyllenian Hermes also called  
The souls of mortal suitors."(1)

Not Penelope's suitors, says he, O wretches! but (souls) awakened and brought to recollection of themselves,  
"From honour so great, and from bliss so long."(2)

That is, from the blessed man from above, or the primal man or Adam, as it seems to them, souls have been conveyed down here into a creation of clay, that they may serve the Demiurge of this creation, Ialdabaoth,(3) a fiery God, a fourth number; for so they call the Demiurge and father of the formal world:—

"And in hand he held a lovely Wand of gold that human eyes enchants, Of whom he will, and those again who slumber rouses."(4)

This, he says, is he who alone has power of life and death. Concerning this, he says, it has been written, "Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron."(5) The poet, however, he says, being desirous of adorning the incomprehensible (potency) of the blessed nature of the Logos, invested him with not an iron, but golden wand. And he enchants the eyes of the dead, as he says, and raises up again those that are slumbering, after having been roused from sleep, and after having been suitors. And concerning these, he says, the Scripture speaks: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise, and Christ will give thee light."(6)

This is the Christ who, he says, in all that have been generated, is the portrayed Son of Man from the unportrayable Logos. This, he says, is the great and unspeakable mystery of the Eleusinian rites, Hye, Cye.(7) And he affirms that all things have been subjected unto him, and this is that which has been spoken, "Their sound is gone forth unto all the earth,"(8) just as it agrees with the expressions, "Mercury(9) waving his wand, guides the souls, but they twittering follow." I mean the disembodied spirits follow continuously in such a way as the poet by his imagery delineates, using these words:—

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

"And as when in the magic cave's recess  
Bats humming fly, and when one drops  
From ridge of rock, and each to other closely clings."(10)

The expression "rock," he says, he uses of Adam. This, he affirms, is Adam: "The chief corner—stone become the head of the corner.(11) For that in the head the substance is the formative brain from which the entire family is fashioned.(12) "Whom," he says, "I place as a rock at the foundations of Zion." Allegorizing, he says, he speaks of the creation of the man. The rock is interposed (within) the teeth, as Homer(13) says, "enclosure of teeth," that is, a wall anti fortress, in which exists the inner man, who thither has fallen from Adam, the primal man above. And he has been "severed without hands to effect the division,"(14) and has been borne down into the image of oblivion, being earthly and clayish. And he asserts that the twittering spirits follow him, that is, the Logos:—

"Thus these, twittering, came together: and then the souls.  
That is, he guides them;

Gentle Hermes led through wide—extended paths."(15)  
That is, he says, into the eternal places separated from all wickedness. For whither, he says, did they come:—

"O'er ocean's streams they came, and Leuca's cliff,  
And by the portals of the sun and land of dreams."

This, he says, is ocean, "generation of gods and generation of men"(16) ever whirled round by the eddies of water, at one time upwards, at another time downwards. But he says there ensues a generation of men when the ocean flows downwards; but when upwards to the wall and fortress and the cliff of Luecas, a generation of gods takes place. This, he asserts, is that which has been written: "I said, Ye are gods, and all children of the highest;"(1) "If ye hasten to fly out of Egypt, and repair beyond the Red Sea into the wilderness," that is, from earthly intercourse to the Jerusalem above, which is the mother of the living;(2) "If, moreover, again you return into Egypt," that is, into earthly intercourse,(3) "ye shall die as men." For mortal, he says, is every generation below, but immortal that which is begotten above, for it is born of water only, and of spirit, being spiritual, not carnal. But what (is born) below is carnal, that is, he says, what is written. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit."(4) This, according to them, is the spiritual generation. This, he says, is the great Jordan(5) which, flowing on (here) below, and preventing the children of Israel from departing out of Egypt—I mean from terrestrial intercourse, for Egypt is with them the body,—Jesus drove back, and made it flow upwards.

**CHAP. III.—FURTHER EXPOSITION OF THE HERESY OF THE NAASSENI;  
PROFESS TO FOLLOW HOMER; ACKNOWLEDGE A TRIAD OF  
PRINCIPLES; THEIR TECHNICAL NAMES OF THE TRIAD; SUPPORT THESE  
ON THE AUTHORITY OF GREEK POETS; ALLEGORIZE OUR SAVIOUR'S  
MIRACLES; THE MYSTERY OF THE SAMOTHRACIANS; WHY THE LORD  
CHOSE TWELVE DISCIPLES; THE NAME CORYBAS, USED BY THRACIANS  
AND PHRYGIANS, EXPLAINED; NAASSENI PROFESS TO FIND THEIR  
SYSTEM IN SCRIPTURE; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF JACOB'S VISION;  
THEIR IDEA OF THE "PERFECT MAN;" THE "PERFECT MAN" CALLED  
"PAPA" BY THE PHRYGIANS; THE NAASSENI AND PHRYGIANS ON THE  
RESURRECTION; THE ECSTASIS OF ST. PAUL; THE MYSTERIES OF  
RELIGION AS ALLUDED TO BY CHRIST; INTERPRETATION OF THE  
PARABLE OF THE SOWER; ALLEGORY OF THE PROMISED LAND;  
COMPARISON OF THE SYSTEM OF THE PHRYGIANS WITH THE  
STATEMENTS OF SCRIPTURE; EXPOSITION OF THE MEANING OF THE  
HIGHER AND LOWER ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES; THE INCARNATION  
DISCOVERABLE HERE ACCORDING TO THE NAASSENI.**

Adopting these and such like (opinions), these most marvellous Gnostics, inventors of a novel(6) grammatical art, magnify Homer as their prophet—as one, (according to them,) who, after the mode adopted in the mysteries, announces these truths; and they mock those who

are not indoctrinated into the holy Scriptures, by betraying them into such notions. They make, however, the following assertion: he who says that all things derive consistence from one, is in error; but he who says that they are of three, is in possession of the truth, and will furnish a solution of the (phenomena of the) universe. For there is, says (the Naassene), one blessed nature of the Blessed Man, of him who is above, (namely) Adam; and there is one mortal nature, that which is below; and there is one kingless generation, which is begotten above, where, he says, is Mariam(7) the sought—for one, and Iothor the mighty sage, and Sephors the gazing one, and Moses whose generation is not in Egypt, for children were born unto him in Madian; and not even this, he says, has escaped the notice of the poets.

"Threefold was our partition; each obtained  
His meed of honour due."(8)

For, says he, it is necessary that the magnitudes be declared, and that they thus be declared by all everywhere, "in order that hearing they may not hear, and seeing they may not see."(9) For if, he says, the magnitudes were not declared, the world could not have obtained consistence. These are the three tumid expressions (of these heretics), CAULACAU,(10) SAULASU, ZEESAR. CAULACAU, i.e., Adam, who is farthest above; SAULASAU, that is, the mortal one below; ZEESAR, that is, Jordan that flows upwards. This, he says, is the hermaphrodite man (present) in all. But those who are ignorant of him, call him Geryon with the threefold body—Geryon, i.e., as if (in the sense of) flowing from earth—but (whom) the Greeks by common consent (style) "celestial horn of the moon," because he mixed and blended all things in all. "For all things," he says, "were made by him, and not even one thing was made without him, and what was made in him is life."(11) This, says he, is the life, the ineffable generation of perfect men, which was not known by preceding generations. But the passage, "nothing was made without him," refers to the formal world, for it was created without his instrumentality by the third and fourth (of the quaternion named above). For says he, this is the cup "CONDY, out of which the king, while he quaffs, draws

CHAP. III.—FURTHER EXPOSITION OF THE HERESY OF THE NAASSENI; PROFESS TO FOLLOW HOME

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

his omens."(12) This, he says, has been discovered hid in the beauteous seeds of Benjamin. And the Greeks likewise, he says, speak of this in the following terms:—

"Water to the raging mouth bring; thou slave, bring wine;  
Intoxicate and plunge me into stupor.  
My tankard tells me  
The sort I must become."(1)

This, says he, was alone sufficient for its being understood by men; (I mean) the cup of Anacreon declaring, (albeit) mutely, an ineffable mystery. For dumb, says he, is Anacreon's cup; and (yet) Anacreon affirms that it speaks to himself, in language mute, as to what sort he must become—that is spiritual, not carnal—if he shall listen in silence to the concealed mystery. And this is the water in those fair nuptials which Jesus changing made into wine. This, he says, is the mighty and true beginning of miracles(2) which Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee, and (thus) manifested the kingdom of heaven. This, says he, is the kingdom of heaven that reposes within us as a treasure, as leaven hid in the three measures of meal.(3)

This is, he says, the great and ineffable mystery of the Samothracians, which it is allowable, he says, for us only who are initiated to know. For the Samothracians expressly hand down, in the mysteries that are celebrated among them, that (same) Adam as the primal man. And habitually there stand in the temple of the Samothracians two images of naked men, having both hands stretched aloft towards heaven, and their pudenda erecta, as with the statue of Mercury on Mount Cyllene. And the aforesaid images are figures of the primal man, and of that spiritual one that is born again, in every respect of the same substance with that man. This, he says, is what is spoken by the Saviour: "If ye do not drink my blood, and eat my flesh, ye will not enter into the kingdom of heaven; but even though," He says, "ye drink of the cup which I drink of, whither I go, ye cannot enter there."(4) For He says He was aware of what sort of nature each of His disciples was, and that there was a necessity that each of them should attain unto His own peculiar nature. For He says He chose twelve disciples from the twelve tribes, and spoke by them to each tribe. On this account, He says, the preachings of the twelve disciples neither did all hear, nor, if they heard, could they receive. For the things that are not according to nature, are with them contrary to nature.

This, he says, the Thracians who dwell around Haemus, and the Phrygians similarly with the Thracians, denominate Corybas, because, (though) deriving the beginning of his descent

from the head above and from the unportrayed brain, and (though) permeating all the principles of the existing state of things, (yet) we do not perceive how and in what manner he comes down. This, says he, is what is spoken: "We have heard his voice, no doubt, but we have not seen his shape."(5) For the voice of him that is set apart(6) and portrayed is heard; but (his) shape, which descends from above from the unportrayed one,—what sort it is, nobody knows. It resides, however, in an earthly mould, yet no one recognises it. This, he says, is "the god that inhabiteth the flood," according to the Psalter, "and who speaketh and crieth from many waters."(7) The "many waters," he says, are the diversified generation of mortal men, from which (generation) he cries and vociferates to the unportrayed man, saying, "Preserve my only-begotten from the lions."(8) In reply to him, it has, says he, been declared, "Israel, thou art my child: fear not; even though thou passest through rivers, they shall not drown thee; even though thou passest through fire, it shall not scorch thee."(9) By rivers he means, says he, the moist substance of generation, and by fire the impulsive principle and desire for generation. "Thou art mine; fear not." And again, he says, "If a mother forget her children, so as not to have pity on them and give them food, I also will forget you."(10) Adam, he says, speaks to his own men: "But even though a woman forget these things, yet I will not forget you. I have painted you on my hands." In regard, however, of his ascension, that is his regeneration, that he may become spiritual, not carnal, the Scripture, he says, speaks (thus): "Open the gates, ye who are your rulers; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in," that is a wonder of wonders.(11) "For who," he says, "is this King of glory? A worm, and not a man; a reproach of man, and an outcast of the people; himself is the King of glory, and powerful in war."(12)

And by war he means the war that is in the body, because its frame has been made out of hostile elements; as it has been written, he says, "Remember the conflict that exists in the body."(13) Jacob, he says, saw this entrance and this gate in his journey into Mesopotamia, that is, when from a child he was now becoming a youth and a man; that is, (the entrance and gate) were made known unto him as he journeyed into Mesopotamia. But

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

Mesopotamia, he says, is the current of the great ocean flowing from the midst of the Perfect Man; and he was astonished at the celestial gate, exclaiming, "How terrible is this place! it is nought else than the house of God, and this (is) the gate of heaven."(1) On account of this, he says, Jesus uses the words, "I am the true gate."(2) Now he who makes these statements is, he says, the Perfect Man that is imaged from the unportrayable one from above. The Perfect Man therefore cannot, he says, be saved, unless, entering in through this gate, he be born again. But this very one the Phrygians, he says, call also PAPA, because he tranquillized all things which, prior to his manifestation, were confusedly and dissonantly moved. For the name, he says, of PAPA belongs simultaneously to all creatures(3)—celestial, and terrestrial, and infernal—who exclaim, Cause to cease, cause to cease the discard of the world, and make "peace for those that are afar off," that is, for material and earthly beings; and "peace for those that are near,"(4) that is, for perfect men that are spiritual and endowed with reason. But the Phrygians denominate this same also "corpse"—buried in the body, as it were, in a mausoleum and tomb. This, he says, is what has been declared, "Ye are whited sepulchres, full," he says, "of dead men's bones within,"(5) because there is not in you the living man. And again he exclaims, "The dead shall start forth from the graves,"(6) that is, from the earthly bodies, being born again spiritual, not carnal. For this, he says, is the Resurrection that takes place through the gate of heaven, through which, he says, all those that do not enter remain dead. These same Phrygians, however, he says, affirm again that this very (man), as a consequence of the change, (becomes) a god. For, he says, he becomes a god when, having risen from the dead, he will enter into heaven through a gate of this kind. Paul the apostle, he says, knew of this gate, partially opening it in a mystery, and stating "that he was caught up by an angel, and ascended as far as the second and third heaven into paradise itself; and that he beheld sights and heard unspeakable words which it would not be possible for man to declare."(7)

These are, he says, what are by all called the secret mysteries, "which (also we speak), not in words taught of human wisdom, but in those taught of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are

foolishness unto him."(8) And these are, he says, the ineffable mysteries of the Spirit, which we alone are acquainted with. Concerning these, he says, the Saviour has declared, "No one can come unto me, except my heavenly Father draw some one unto me."(9) For it is very difficult, he says, to accept and receive this great and ineffable mystery. And again, it is said, the Saviour has declared, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."(10) And it is necessary that they who perform this (will), not hear it merely, should enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again, he says, the Saviour has declared, "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you."(11) For "the publicans," he says, are those who receive the revenues(12) of all things;(13) but we, he says, are the publicans, "unto whom the ends of the ages have come."(14) For "the ends," he says, are the seeds scattered from the unportrayable one upon the world, through which the whole cosmical system is completed; for through these also it began to exist. And this, he says, is what has been declared: "The sower went forth to sow. And some fell by the wayside, and was trodden down; and some on the rocky places, and sprang up," he says, "and on account of its having no depth (of soil), it withered and died; and some," he says, "fell on fair and good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty fold. Who hath ears," he says, "to hear, let him hear."(15) The meaning of this, he says, is as follows, that none becomes a hearer of these mysteries, unless only the perfect Gnostics. This, he says, is the fair and good land which Moses speaks of: "I will bring you into a fair and good land, into a land flowing with milk and honey."(16) This, he says, is the honey and the milk, by tasting which those that are perfect become kingless, and share in the Pleroma. This, he says, is the Pleroma, through which all existent things that are produced(17) have from the ingenerable one been both produced and completed.

And this same (one) is styled also by(18) the Phrygians "unfruitful." For he is unfruitful when he is carnal, and causes the desire of the flesh. This, he says, is what is spoken: "Every tree not producing good fruit, is cut down and cast into the fire."(1) For these fruits, he says, are only rational living men, who enter in through the third gate. They say, forsooth, "Ye devour the dead, and make the living; (but) if ye eat the living, what will ye do?" They assert, however, that the living "are rational faculties and minds, and men—pearls of that unportrayable one cast before the creature below."(2) This, he says, is what (Jesus) asserts: "Throw not that which is holy unto the dogs, nor pearls unto the swine."(3) Now they allege that the work of swine and dogs is the intercourse of the woman with a man. And the Phrygians, he says, call this very one "goat-herd" (Aipolis), not because, he says, he



## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

is accustomed to feed the goats female and male, as the natural (men) use the name, but because, he says, he is "Aipolis"—that is, always ranging over,—who both revolves and carries around the entire cosmical system by his revolutionary motion. For the word "Polein" signifies to turn and change things; whence, he says, they all call the twos centre of the heaven poles (Poloi). And the poet says:—

"What sea-born sinless sage comes hither,  
Undying Egyptian Proteus?"(4)

He is not undone,(5) he says,(6) but revolves as it were, and goes round himself. Moreover, also, cities in which we dwell, because we turn and go round in them, are denominated "Poleis." In this manner, he says, the Phygians call this one "Aipolis," inasmuch as he everywhere ceaselessly turns all things, and changes them into their own peculiar (functions). And the Phrygians style him, he says, "very fruitful" likewise, "because," says he, "more numerous are the children of the desolate one, than those of her which hath an husband;"(7) that is, things by being born again become immortal and abide for ever in great numbers, even though the things that are produced may be few; whereas things carnal, he says, are all corruptible, even though very many things (of this type) are produced. For this reason, he says, "Rachel wept(8) for her children, and would not," says (the prophet), "be comforted; sorrowing for them, for she knew," says he, "that they are not."(9) But Jeremiah likewise utters lamentation for Jerusalem below, not the city in Phoenicia, but the corruptible generation below. For Jeremiah likewise, he says, was aware of the Perfect Man, of him that is born again—of water and the

Spirit not carnal. At least Jeremiah himself remarked: "He is a man, and who shall know him?"(10) In this manner, (the Naassene) says, the knowledge of the Perfect Man is exceedingly profound, and difficult of comprehension. For, he says, the beginning of perfection is a knowledge of man, whereas knowledge of God is absolute perfection.

The Phrygians, however, assert, he says, that he is likewise "a green ear of corn reaped." And after the Phrygians, the Athenians, while initiating people into the Eleusinian rites, likewise display to those who are being admitted to the highest grade at these mysteries, the mighty, and marvellous, and most perfect secret suitable for one initiated into the highest mystic truths: (I allude to) an ear of corn in silence reaped. But this ear of corn is also (considered) among the Athenians to constitute the perfect enormous illumination (that has descended) from the unportrayable one, just as the Hierophant himself (declares); not, indeed, emasculated like Attis,(11) but made a eunuch by means of hemlock, and despising(12) all carnal generation. (Now) by night in Eleusis, beneath a huge fire, (the Celebrant,) enacting the great and secret mysteries, vociferates and cries aloud, saying, "August Brimo has brought forth a consecrated son, Brimus;" that is, a potent (mother has been delivered of) a potent child. But revered, he says, is the generation that is spiritual, heavenly, from above, and potent is he that is so born. For the mystery is called "Eleusin" and "Anactorium." "Eleusin," because, he says, we who are spiritual come flowing down from Adam above; for the word "eleusesthai" is, he says, of the same import with the expression "to come." But "Anactorium" is of the same import with the expression "to ascend upwards." This, he says, is what they affirm who have been initiated in the mysteries of the Eleusinians. It is, however, a regulation of law, that those who have been admitted into the lesser should again be initiated into the Great Mysteries. For greater destinies obtain greater portions. But the inferior mysteries, he says, are those of Proserpine below; in regard of which mysteries, and the path which leads thither, which is wide and spacious, and conducts those that are perishing to Proserpine, the poet likewise says:—

"But under her a fearful path extends,  
Hollow miry, yet best guide to  
Highly-honoured Aphrodite's lovely grove."(13)

These, he says, are the inferior mysteries, those appertaining to carnal generation. Now, those men who are initiated into these inferior (mysteries) ought to pause, and (then) be admitted into the great (and) heavenly (ones). For they, he says, who obtain their shares (in this mystery), receive greater portions. For this, he says, is the gate of heaven; and this a house of God, where the Good Deity dwells alone. And into this (gate), he says, no unclean person shall enter, nor one that is natural or carnal; but it is reserved for the spiritual only. And those who come

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

hither ought to cast off(1) their garments, and become all of them bridegrooms, emasculated through the virginal spirit. For this is the virgin(2) who carries in her womb and conceives and brings forth a son, not animal, not corporeal, but blessed for evermore. Concerning these, it is said, the Saviour has expressly declared that "straight and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there are that enter upon it; whereas broad and spacious is the way that leadeth unto destruction, and many there are that pass through it."(3)

**CHAP. IV.—FURTHER USE MADE OF THE SYSTEM OF THE PHRYGIANS;  
MODE OF CELEBRATING THE MYSTERIES; THE MYSTERY OF THE  
"GREAT MOTHER;" THESE MYSTERIES HAVE A JOINT OBJECT OF  
WORSHIP WITH THE NAASSENI; THE NAASSENI ALLEGORIZE THE  
SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN; THE ALLEGORY  
APPLIED TO THE LIFE OF JESUS.**

The Phrygians, however, further assert that the father of the universe is "Amygdalus," not a tree, he says, but that he is "Amygdalus" who previously existed; and he having in himself the perfect fruit, as it were, throbbing and moving in the depth, rent his breasts, and produced his now invisible, and nameless, and ineffable child, respecting whom we shall speak. For the word "Amyxai" signifies, as it were, to burst and sever through, as he says (happens) in the case of inflamed bodies, and which have in themselves any tumour; and when doctors have cut this, they call it "Amychai." In this way, he says, the Phrygians call him "Amygdalus," from which proceeded and was born the Invisible (One), "by whom all things were made, and nothing was made without Him."(4) And the Phrygians say that what has been thence produced is "Syrictas" (piper), because the Spirit that is born is harmonious. "For God," he says, "is Spirit; wherefore," he affirms, "neither in this mountain do the true worshippers worship, nor in Jerusalem, but in spirit. For the adoration of the perfect ones," he says, "is spiritual, not carnal."(5) The Spirit, however, he

says, is there where likewise the Father is named, and the Son is there born from this Father. This, he says, is the many-named, thousand-eyed Incomprehensible One, of whom every nature—each, however, differently—is desirous. This, he says, is the word of God, which, he says, is a word of revelation of the Great Power. Wherefore it will be sealed, and hid, and concealed, lying in the habitation where lies the basis of the root of the universe, viz. Aeons, Powers, Intelligences, Gods, Angels, delegated Spirits, Entities, Nonentities, Generables, Ingenerables, Incomprehensibles, Comprehensibles, Years, Months, Days, Hours, (and) Invisible Point from which(6) what is least begins to increase gradually. That which is, he says, nothing, and which consists of nothing, inasmuch as it is indivisible—(I mean) a point—will become through its own reflective power a certain incomprehensible magnitude. This, he says, is the kingdom of heaven, the grain of mustard seed,(7) the point which is indivisible in the body; and, he says, no one knows this (point) save the spiritual only. This, he says, is what has been spoken: "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."(8)

They rashly assume in this manner, that whatsoever things have been said and done by all men, (may be made to harmonize) with their own particular mental view, alleging that all things become spiritual. Whence likewise they assert, that those exhibiting themselves in theatres,—not even these say or do anything without premeditation. Therefore, he says, when, on the people assembling in the theatres, any one enters clad in a remarkable robe, carrying a harp and playing a tune (upon it, accompanying it) with a song of the great mysteries, he speaks as follows, not knowing what he says: "Whether (thou art) the race of Saturn or happy Jupiter,(9) or mighty Rhea, Hail, Attis, gloomy mutilation of Rhea. Assyrians style thee thrice-longed-for Adonis, and the whole of Egypt (calls thee) Osiris, celestial horn of the moon; Greeks denominate (thee) Wisdom; Samothracians, venerable Adam; Haemonians, Corybas; and them Phrygians (name thee) at one time Papa, at another time Corpse, or God, or Fruitless, or Aipolos, or green Ear of Corn that has been reaped, or whom the very fertile Amygdalus produced—a man, a musician." This, he says, is multiform Attis, whom while they celebrate in a hymn, they utter these words: "I will hymn Attis, son of Rhea, not with the buzzing sounds of trumpets, or of Idaean pipers, which accord with (the voices of) the Curetes; but I will mingle (my song) with Apollo's music of harps, 'evoe, evan,' inasmuch as thou art Pan, as thou art Bacchus, as thou art shepherd of brilliant stars."

On account of these and such like reasons, these constantly attend the mysteries called those of the "Great Mother," supposing especially that they behold by means of the ceremonies performed there the entire mystery. For these have nothing more than the ceremonies that are performed there, except that they are not emasculated: they merely complete the work of the emasculated. For with the utmost severity and vigilance they enjoin (on

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

their votaries) to abstain, as if they were emasculated, from intercourse with a woman. The rest, however, of the proceeding (observed in these mysteries), as we have declared at some length, (they follow) just as (if they were) emasculated persons. And they do not worship any other object but Naas, (from thence) being styled Naasseni. But Naas is the serpent from whom, i.e., from the word Naas, (the Naassene) says, are all that under heaven are denominated temples (Naous). And (he states) that to him alone—that is, Naas—is dedicated every shrine and every initiatory rite, and every mystery; and, in general, that a religious ceremony could not be discovered under heaven, in which a temple (Naos) has no existence; and in the temple itself is Naas, from whom it has received its denomination of temple (Naos). And these affirm that the serpent is a moist substance, just as Thales also, the Milesian, (spoke of water as an originating principle,) and that nothing of existing things, immortal or mortal, animate or inanimate, could consist at all without him. And that all things are subject unto him, and that he is good, and that he has all things in himself, as in the horn of the one-horned bull;(1) so as that he imparts beauty and bloom to all things that exist according to their own nature and peculiarity, as if passing through all, just as ("the river) proceeding forth from Edem, and dividing itself into four heads."(2)

They assert, however, that Edem is the brain, as it were, bound and tightly fastened in encircling robes, as if (in) heaven. But they suppose that man, as far as the head only, is Paradise, therefore that "this river, which proceeds out of i Edem," that is, from the brain, "is divided into four heads,(3) and that the name of the first river is called Phison; this is that which encompasseth all the land of Havilath: there is gold, and the gold of that land is excellent, and there is bdellium and the onyx stone." This, he says, is the eye, which, by its honour (among the rest

of the bodily organs), and its colours, furnishes testimony to what is spoken. "But the name of the second river is Gihon: this is that which compasseth the land of Ethiopia." This, he says, is hearing, since Gihon is (a tortuous stream), resembling a sort of labyrinth. "And the name of the third is Tigris. This is that which floweth over against (the country of) the Assyrians." This, he says,(4) is smelling, employing the exceedingly rapid current of the stream (as an analogy of this sense). But it flows over against (the country of) the Assyrians, because in every act of respiration following upon expiration, the breath drawn in from the external atmosphere enters with swifter motion and greater force. For this, he says, is the nature of respiration. "But the fourth river is Euphrates." This, they assert, is the mouth, through which are the passage outwards of prayer, and the passage inwards of nourishment. (The mouth) makes glad, and nurtures and fashions the Spiritual Perfect Man. This, he says, is "the water that is above the firmament,"(5) concerning which, he says, the Saviour has declared, "If thou knewest who it is that asks, thou wouldst have asked from Him, and He would have given you to drink living, bubbling water."(6) Into this water, he says, every nature enters, choosing its own substances; and its peculiar quality comes to each nature from this water, he says, more than iron does to the magnet, and the gold to the backbone(7) of the sea falcon, and the chaff to the amber.

But if any one, he says, is blind from birth, and has never beheld the true light, "which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world,"(8) by us let him recover his sight, and behold, as it were, through some paradise planted with every description of tree, and supplied with abundance of fruits, water coursing its way through all the trees and fruits; and he will see that from one and the same water the olive chooses for itself and draws the oil, and the vine the wine; and (so is it with) the rest of plants, according to each genus. That Man, however, he says, is of no reputation in the world, but of illustrious fame in heaven, being betrayed by those who are ignorant (of his perfections) to those who know him not, being accounted as a drop from a cask.(9) We, however, he says, are spiritual, who, from the life-giving water of Eu-phrates, which flows through the midst of Babylon, choose our own peculiar quality as we pass through the true gate, which is the blessed Jesus. And of all men, we Christians alone are those who in the third gate celebrate the mystery, and are anointed there with the unspeakable chrism from a horn, as David (was anointed), not from an earthen vessel,(1) he says, as (was) Saul, who held converse with the evil demon(2) of carnal concupiscence.

## CHAP. V.—EXPLANATION OF THE SYSTEM OF THE NAASSENI TAKEN FROM ONE OF THEIR HYMNS.

The foregoing remarks, then, though few out of many, we have thought proper to bring forward. For innumerable are the silly and crazy attempts of folly. But since, to the best of our ability, we have explained the unknown Gnosis, it seemed expedient likewise to adduce the following point. This psalm of theirs has been composed, by which they seem to celebrate all the mysteries of the error (advanced by) them in a hymn, couched in the following terms:—

The world's producing law was Primal Mind,(3)  
And next was First-born's outpoured Chaos;  
And third, the soul received its law of toil:  
Encircl'd, therefore, with an aqueous(4) form,  
With care o'erpowered it succumbs to death.  
Now holding sway, it eyes the light,  
And now it weeps on misery flung;  
Now it mourns, now it thrills with joy;  
Now it wails, now it hears its doom;  
Now it hears its doom, now it dies,  
And now it leaves us, never to return.  
It, hapless straying, treads the maze of ills.  
But Jesus said, Father, behold,  
A strife of ills across the earth  
Wanders from thy breath (of wrath);  
But bitter Chaos (man) seeks to shun,  
And knows not how to pass it through.  
On this account, O Father, send me;  
Bearing seals, I shall descend;  
Through ages whole I'll sweep,  
All mysteries I'll unravel,  
And forms of Gods I'll show;  
And secrets of the saintly path,  
Styled "Gnosis," I'll impart.

## CHAP. VI.—THE OPHITES THE GRAND SOURCE OF HERESY.

These doctrines, then, the Naasseni attempt to establish, calling themselves Gnostics. But since the error is many-headed and diversified, resembling, in truth, the hydra that we read of in history; when, at one blow, we have struck off the heads of this (delusion) by means of refutation, employing the wand of truth, we shall entirely exterminate the monster. For neither

do the remaining heresies present much difference of aspect from this, having a mutual connection through (the same) spirit of error. But since, altering the words and the names of the serpent, they wish that there should be many heads of the serpent, neither thus shall we fail thoroughly to refute them as they desire.

## CHAP. VII.—THE SYSTEM OF THE PERATAE; THEIR TRITHEISM; EXPLANATION OF THE INCARNATION.

There is also unquestionably a certain other (head of the hydra,(5) namely, the heresy) of the Peratae,(6) whose blasphemy against Christ has for many years escaped notice. And the present is a fitting opportunity for bringing to light the secret mysteries of such (heretics). These allege that the world is one, triply divided. And of the triple division with them, one portion is a certain single originating principle, just as it were a huge fountain, which can be divided mentally into infinite segments. Now the first segment, and that which, according to them, is (a segment) in preference (to others),(7) is a triad, and it is called a Perfect Good, (and) a Paternal Magnitude. And the second portion of the triad of these is, as it were, a certain infinite crowd of potentialities that are generated(8) from themselves, (while) the third is formal.(9) And the first, which is good, is unbegotten, and the second is a self-producing good, and the third is created; and hence it is that they expressly declare that there are three Gods, three Logoi, three Minds, three Men. For to each portion of the world, after the division has been made, they assign both Gods, and Logoi, and Minds, and Men, and the rest; but that from unorigination and the first segment(10) of the world, when afterwards the world had attained unto its completion, there came down from above, for causes that we shall afterwards declare, in the time of Herod a certain man called Christ, with a threefold nature, and a threefold body, and a threefold power, (and) having in himself all (species of) concretions and potentialities (derivable) from the three divisions of the world; and that this, says (the Peratic), is what is spoken: "It pleased him that in him should dwell all fulness bodily,"(1) and in Him the entire Divinity resides of the triad as thus divided. For, he says, that from the two superjacent worlds—namely, from that (portion of the triad) which is unbegotten, and from that which is self-producing—there have been conveyed down into this world in which we are, seeds of all sorts of potentialities. What, however, the mode of the descent is, we shall afterwards declare.

(The Peratic) then says that Christ descended from above from unorigination, that by His descent all things triply divided might be saved. For some things, he says, being borne down from above, will ascend through Him, whereas whatever (beings) form plots against those which are carried down from above are cast off,(2) and being placed in a state of punishment, are renounced. This, he says, is what is spoken: "For the Son of man came not into the world to destroy the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." The world, he says, he denominates those two parts that are situated above, viz., both the unbegotten (portion of the triad), and the self-produced one. And when Scripture, he says, uses the words, "that we may not be condemned with the world," it alludes to the third portion of (the triad, that is) the formal world. For the third portion, which he styles the world (in which we are), must perish; but the two (remaining portions), which are situated above, must be rescued from corruption.

## CHAP. VIII.—THE PERATAE DERIVE THEIR SYSTEM FROM THE ASTROLOGERS; THIS PROVED BY A STATEMENT OF THE ASTROLOGICAL THEORIES OF THE ZODIAC; HENCE THE TERMINOLOGY OF THE PERATIC HERETICS.

Let us, then, in the first place, learn how (the Peratists), deriving this doctrine from astrologers, act despitefully towards Christ, working destruction for those who follow them in an error of this description. For the astrologers, alleging that there is one world, divide it into the twelve fixed portions of the zodiacal signs, and call the world of the fixed zodiacal signs one immoveable world; and the other they

affirm to be a world of erratic (signs), both in power, and position, and number, and that it extends as far as the moon.(3) And (they lay down), that (one) world derives from (the other) world a certain power, and mutual participation (in that power), and that the subjacent obtain this participation from the superjacent (portions). In order, however, that what is (here) asserted may be perspicuous, I shall one by one employ those very expressions of the astrologers; (and in doing so) I shall only be reminding my readers of statements previously made in the department of the work where we have explained the entire art of the astrologers. What, then, the opinions are which those (speculators) entertain, are as follow:—

(Their doctrine is), that from an emanation of the stars the generations of the subjacent (parts) is consummated. For, as they wistfully gazed upward upon heaven, the Chaldeans asserted that (the seven stars)(4) contain a reason for the efficient causes of the occurrence of all the events that happen unto us, and that the parts of the fixed zodiacal signs co-operate (in this influence). Into twelve (parts they divide the zodiacal circle), and each zodiacal sign into thirty portions, and each portion into sixty diminutive parts; for so they denominate the very smallest parts, and those that are indivisible. And of the zodiacal signs, they term some male, but others feminine; and some with two bodies, but others not so; and some tropical, whereas others firm. The male signs, then, are either feminine, which possess a co-operative nature for the procreation of males, (or are themselves productive of females.) For Aries is a male zodiacal sign, but Taurus female; and the rest (are denominated) according to the same analogy, some male, but others female. And I suppose that the Pythagoreans, being swayed from such (considerations), style the Monad male, and the Duad female; and, again, the Triad male, and analogically the remainder of the even and odd numbers. Some, however, dividing each zodiacal sign into twelve parts, employ almost the same method. For example, in Aries, they style the first of the twelve parts both Aries and a male, but the second both Taurus and a female, and the third both Gemini and a male; and the same plan is pursued in the case of the rest of the parts. And they assert that there are signs with two bodies, viz., Gemini and the signs diametrically opposite, namely Sagittarius, and Virgo, and Pisces, and that the rest have not two bodies. And (they state) that some are likewise tropical, and when the sun stands in these, he causes great turnings(5) of the surrounding (sign). Aries is a sign of this description, and that which is diametrically opposite to it, just as Libra, and Capricorn, and Cancer. For in Aries is the vernal turning, and in Capricorn that of winter, and in Cancer that of summer, and in Libra that of autumn.

The details, however, concerning this system we have minutely explained in the book preceding this; and from it any one who wishes instruction (on the point), may learn how it is that the originators of this Peratic heresy, viz., Euphrates the Peratic, and Celbes the Carystian,(1) have, in the transference (into their own system of opinions from these sources), made alterations in name only, while in reality they have put forward similar tenets. (Nay more), they have, with immoderate zeal, themselves devoted (their attention) to the art (of the astrologers). For also the astrologers speak of the limits of the stars, in which they assert that the dominant stars have greater influence; as, for instance, on some they act injuriously, while on others they act well. And of these they denominate some malicious, and some beneficent. And (stars) are said to look upon one another, and to harmonize with each other, so that they appear according to (the shape of) a triangle or square. The stars, looking on one another, are figured according to (the shape of(2)) a triangle, having an intervening distance of the extent of three zodiacal signs; whereas (those that have an interval of) two zodiacal signs are figured according to (the shape of) a square. And (their doctrine is), that as in the same way as in a man, the subjacent parts sympathize



## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

with the head, and the head likewise sympathizes with the subjacent parts, so all terrestrial (sympathize) with super-lunar(3) objects. But (the astrologers go further than this(4)); for there exists (according to them) a certain difference and incompatibility(5) between these, so as that they do not involve one and the same union. This combination and divergence of the stars, which is a Chaldean (tenet), has been arrogated to themselves by those of whom we have previously spoken.

Now these, falsifying the name of truth, proclaim as a doctrine of Christ an insurrection of Aeons and revolts of good into (the ranks of) evil powers; and they speak of the confederations of good powers with wicked ones. Denominating them, therefore, TOPARCHAI and PROASTIOI,(6) and (though thus) framing for themselves very many other names not suggested (to them from other sources), they have yet unskillfully systematized the entire imaginary doctrine of the astrologers concerning the stars. And since they have introduced a supposition pregnant with immense error, they shall be refuted through the instrumentality of our admirable arrangement. For I shall set down, in contrast with the previously mentioned Chaldaic art of the astrologers, some of the Peratic(7) treatises, from which, by means of comparison, there will be an opportunity of perceiving how the Peratic doctrines are those confessedly of the astrologers, not of Christ.

## CHAP.IX.—SYSTEM OF THE PERATAE EXPLAINED OUT OF ONE OF THEIR OWN BOOKS.

It seems, then, expedient to set forth a certain one of the books held(8) in repute amongst them, in which the following passage(9) occurs: "I am a voice of arousal from slumber in the age of night. Henceforward I commence to strip the power which is from chaos. The power is that of the lowest depth of mud, which uphears the slime of the incorruptible (and) humid expanse of space. And it is the entire power of the convulsion, which, ever in motion, and presenting the colour of water, whirls things on that are stationary, restrains things tremulous, sets things free as they proceed, lightens(10) things as they abide, removes things on the increase, a faithful steward of the track of the breezes, enjoying the things disgorged from the twelve eyes of the law,(11) (and) manifesting a seal(12) to the power which along with itself distributes the downborne invisible waters, and has been called Thalassa. This power ignorance has been accustomed to denominate Cronus, guarded with chains because he tightly bound the fold of the dense and misty and obscure and murky Tartarus. According to the image of this were produced Cepheus, Prometheus, (and) Japetus. The Power to which has been entrusted Thalassa(1) is hermaphrodite. And it fastens the hissing sound arising from the twelve mouths into twelve pipes, and pours it forth. And the power itself is subtle, and removes the controlling, boisterous, upward motion (of the sea), and seals the tracks of its paths, lest (any antagonistic power) should wage war or introduce, any alteration. The tempestuous daughter of this one is a faithful protectress of all sorts of waters. Her name is Chorzar. Ignorance is in the habit of styling this (power) Neptune, according to whose image was produced Glaucus, Melicertes, Ino, Nebroe.(2) He that is encircled with the pyramid of twelve angels,(3) and darkens the gate into the pyramid with various colours, and completes the entire in the sable hues of Night: this one ignorance denominated Cronus.(4) And his ministers were five,—first U, second Aoi, third Uo, fourth Uoab, fifth ... Other trustworthy managers (there are) of his province of night and day, who repose in their own power. Ignorance denominated these the erratic stars, from whom depends a corruptible generation. Manager of the rising of the star(5) is Carphacasemeocheir, (and) Eccabbacara (is the same). Ignorance is in the habit of denominating these Curetes chief of the winds; third in order is Ariel, according to whose image was generated Aeolus, Briares. And chief of the twelve-houred nocturnal (power) is Soclan, whom ignorance is accustomed to style Osiris; (and) according to the image of this one was born Admetus, Medea, Helen, Aethusa. Chief of the twelve-houred diurnal power is Euno. This is manager of the rising of the star Protocamarus and of the ethereal (region), but ignorance has denominated him Isis. A sign of this one is the Dog-star, according to whose image were born Ptolemaeus son of Arsinoe, Didyma, Cleopatra, and Olympias. God's right-hand power is that which ignorance has denominated Rhea, according to whose image were produced Attis, Mygdon,(6) (and) Enone. The left-hand power has lordship over sustenance, and ignorance is in the habit of styling this Ceres, (while) her name is Bena; and according to the image of this one were born Celeus, Triptolemus, Misyr, and Praxidica.(7) The right-hand power has lordship over fruits. This one ignorance has denominated Mena, according to whose image were born Bumegas,(8) Ostanes, Mercury Trismegistus, Curites, Petosiris, Zodarium, Berosus, Astrampsuchus, (and) Zoroaster. The left-hand power is (lord) of fire, (and) ignorance has denominated this one Vulcan, according to whose image were born Ericthonius, Achilles, Capaneus, Phaethon,(9) Meleager, Tydeus, Enceladus, Raphael, Suriel, (and) Omphale. There are three intermediate powers suspended from air, authors of generation. These ignorance has been in the habit of denominating Fates; and according to the image of these were produced the house of Priam, the house of Laius, Ino, Autonoe, Agave, Athamas, Procne, Danaides, and Peliades. A power (there is) hermaphrodite, always continuing in infancy, never waxing old, cause of beauty, pleasure, maturity, desire, and concupiscence; and ignorance has been accustomed to style this Eros, according to whose image were born Paris, Narcissus, Ganymede, Endymion, Tithonus, Icarius, Leda, Amymone, Thetis, Hesperides, Jason, Leander, (and) Hero." These are PROASTIOI up to AETHER, for with this title also he inscribes the book.

## CHAP. X.—THE PERATIC HERESY NOMINALLY DIFFERENT FROM ASTROLOGY, BUT REALLY THE SAME SYSTEM ALLEGORIZED.

It has been easily made evident to all, that the heresy of the Peratae is altered in name only from the (art) of the astrologers. And the rest of the books of these (heretics) contain the same method, if it were agreeable to any one to wade through them all. For, as I said, they suppose that the causes of the generation of all begotten things are things unbegotten and superjacent, and that the world with us has been produced after the mode of emanation, which (world) they denominate formal. And (they maintain) that all those stars together which are beheld in the firmament have been causes of the generation of this world. They have, however, altered the name of these, as one may perceive from the PROASTIOI by means of a comparison (of the two systems). And secondly, according to the same method as that whereby the world was made from a supernal emanation, they affirm that in this manner objects here derive from the emanation of the stars their generation, and corruption, and arrangement. Since, then, astrologers are acquainted with the horoscope, and meridian, and setting, and the point opposite the meridian; and since these stars occupy at different times different positions(1) in space, on account of the perpetual revolution of the universe, there are (necessarily) at different periods different declinations towards a centre, and (different) ascensions to centres.(2) (Now the Peratic here—ties), affixing an allegorical import to this arrangement of the astrologers, delineate the centre, as it were, a god and monad and lord over universal generation, whereas the declination (is regarded by them as a power) on the left, and ascension on the right. When any one, therefore, falling in with the treatises of these (heretics), finds mention among them of right or left power, let him recur to the centre, and the declination, and the ascension (of the Chaldean sages, and) he will clearly observe that the entire system of these (Peratae) consists of the astrological doctrine.

**CHAP. XI.—WHY THEY CALL THEMSELVES PERATAE; THEIR THEORY OF GENERATION SUPPORTED BY AN APPEAL TO ANTIQUITY; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE EXODUS OF ISRAEL; THEIR SYSTEM OF "THE SERPENT;" DEDUCED BY THEM FROM SCRIPTURE; THIS THE REAL IMPORT OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE ASTROLOGERS,**

They denominate themselves, however, Peratae, imagining that none of those things existing by generation can escape the determined lot for those things that derive their existence from generation. For if, says (the Peratic), anything be altogether begotten, it also perishes, as also is the opinion of the Sibyl.(3) But we alone, he says, who are conversant with the necessity of generation, and the paths through which man has entered into the world, and who have been accurately instructed (in these matters), we alone are competent to proceed through and pass beyond destruction. (4) But water, he says, is destruction; nor did the world, he says, perish by any other thing quicker than by water. Water, however, is that which rolls around among the PROASTIOI, (and) they assert (it to be) Cronus. For such a power, he says, is of the colour of water; and this power, he says—that is, Cronus—none of those things existent by generation can escape. For Cronus is a cause to every generation, in regard of succumbing under destruction, and there could not exist (an instance of) generation in which Cronus does not interfere. This, he says, is what the poets also affirm, and what even appals the gods:—

"For know, he says, this earth and spacious heaven above,

And Styx' flooded water, which is the oath That greatest is, and dreaded most by gods of happy life."

And not only, he says, do the poets make this statement, but already also the very wisest men among the Greeks. And Heraclitus is even one of these, employing the following words: "For to souls water becomes death." This death, (the Peratic) says, seizes the Egyptians in the Red Sea, along with their chariots. All, however, who are ignorant (of this fact), he says, are Egyptians. And this, they assert, is the departure from Egypt, (that is,) from the body. For they suppose little Egypt to be body, and that it crosses the Red Sea—that is, the water of corruption, which is Cronus—and that it reaches a place beyond the Red Sea, that is, generation; and that it comes into the wilderness, that is, that it attains a condition independent of generation, where there exist promiscuously all the gods of destruction and the God of salvation.

Now, he says, the stars are the gods of destruction, which impose upon existent things the necessity of alterable generation. These, he says, Moses denominated serpents of the wilderness, which gnaw and utterly ruin those who imagined that they had crossed the Red Sea. To those, then, he says, who of the children of Israel were bitten in the wilderness, Moses exhibited the real and perfect serpent; and they who believed on this serpent were not bitten in the wilderness, that is, (were not assailed) by (evil) powers. No one therefore, he says, is there who is able to save and deliver those that come forth from Egypt, that is, from the body and from this world, unless alone the serpent that is perfect and replete with fulness. Upon this (serpent), he says, he who fixes his hope is not destroyed by the snakes of the wilderness, that is, by the gods of generation. (This statement) is written, he says, in a book of Moses. This serpent, he says, is the power that attended Moses,(5) the rod that was turned into a serpent. The serpents, however, of the magicians—(that is,) the gods of destruction—withstood the power of Moses in Egypt, but the rod of Moses reduced them all to subjection and slew them. This universal serpent is, he says, the wise discourse of Eve. This, he says, is the mystery of Edem, this the river of Edem; this the mark that was set upon Cain, that any one who findeth him might not kill him. This, he says,(6) is Cain,(7) whose sacrifice(8) the god of this world did not accept. The gory sacrifice, however, of Abel he approved of; for the ruler of this world rejoices in (offerings of) blood. This, he says, is he who appeared in the last days, in form of a man, in the times of Herod, being born after the likeness of Joseph, who was sold by the hand of his brethren, to whom alone belonged the coat of many colours. This, he says, is he who is according to the likeness of Esau, whose garment—he not being himself present—was blessed; who did not receive, he says, the benediction uttered by him of enfeebled vision.(1) He acquired, however, wealth from a source independent of this, receiving nothing from him whose eyes were dim; and Jacob saw his countenance,(2) as a man beholds the face of God. In regard of

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

this, he says, it has been written that "Nebrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord."(3) And there are, he says, many who closely imitate this (Nimrod): as numerous are they as the gnawing (serpents) which were seen in the wilderness by the children of Israel, from which that perfect serpent which Moses set up delivered those that were bitten. This, he says, is that which has been declared: "In the same manner as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so also must the Son of man be lifted up."(4) According to the likeness of this was made in the desert the brazen serpent which Moses set up. Of this alone, he says, the image is in heaven, always conspicuous in light.

This, he says, is the great beginning respecting which Scripture has spoken. Concerning this, he says it has been declared: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This was in the beginning with God, all things were made by Him, and without Him was not one thing that was made. And what was formed in Him is life."(5) And in Him, he says, has been formed Eve; (now) Eve is life. This, however, he says, is Eve, mother of all living,(6)—a common nature, that is, of gods, angels, immortals, mortals, irrational creatures, (and) rational ones. For, he says, the expression "all" he uttered of all (existences). And if the eyes of any, he says, are blessed, this one, looking upward on the firmament, will behold at the mighty summit(7) of heaven the beautiful image of the serpent, turning itself, and becoming an originating principle of every (species of) motion to all things that are being produced. He will (thereby) know that without him nothing consists, either of things in heaven, or things on earth. or things under the earth. Not night, not

moon, not fruits, not generation, not wealth, not sustenance, not anything at all of existent things, is without his guidance. In regard of this, he says, is the great wonder which is beheld in the firmament by those who are able to observe it. For, he says, at this top of his head, a fact which is more incredible than all things to those who are ignorant, "are setting and rising mingled one with other." This it is in regard of which ignorance is in the habit of affirming: in heaven

"Draco revolves, marvel mighty of monster dread."(8)

And on both sides of him have been placed Corona and Lyra; and above, near the top itself of the head, is visible the piteous man "Engonasis,"

"Holding the right foot's end of Draco fierce."(9)

And at the back of Engonasis is an imperfect serpent, with both hands tightly secured by Anguitenens, and being hindered from touching Corona that lies beside the perfect serpent.

## CHAP. XII.—COMPENDIOUS STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE PERATAE.

This is the diversified wisdom of the Peratic heresy, which it is difficult to declare in its entirety, so intricate is it on account of its seeming to consist of the astrological art.' As far forth, then, as this is possible, we shall briefly explain the whole force of this (heresy). In order, however, that we may by a compendious statement elucidate the entire doctrine of these persons, it appears expedient to subjoin the following observations. According to them, the universe is Father, Son, (and) Matter; (but) each of these three has endless capacities in itself. Intermediate, then, between the Matter and the Father sits the Son, the Word, the Serpent, always being in motion towards the unmoved Father, and (towards) Matter itself in motion. And at one time he is turned towards the Father, and receives the powers into his own person; but at another time takes up these powers, and is turned towards Matter. And Matter, (though) devoid of attribute, and being unfashioned, moulds (into itself) forms from the Son which the Son moulded from the Father.

But the Son derives shape from the Father after a mode ineffable, and unspeakable, and unchangeable; (that is,) in such a manner as Moses says that tire colours of the conceived (kine) flowed from the rods(10) which were fixed in the drinking-troughs. And in like manner, again, that capacities flowed also from the Son into Matter, similarly to the power in reference to conception which came from the rods upon the conceived (kine). And the difference of colours, and the dissimilarity which flowed from the rods through the waters upon the sheep, is, he says, the difference of corruptible and incorruptible generation. As, however, one who paints from nature, though he takes nothing away from animals, transfers by his pencil all forms to the canvas; so the Son, by a power which belongs to himself, transfers paternal marks from the Father into Matter. All the paternal marks are here, and there are not any more. For if any one, he says, of those (beings) which are here will have strength to perceive that he is a paternal mark transferred hither from above, (and that he is) incarnate—just as by the conception resulting from the rod a something white is produced,—he is of the same substance altogether with the Father in heaven, and returns thither. If, however, he may not happen upon this doctrine, neither will he understand the necessity of generation, just as an abortion born at night will perish at night. When, therefore, he says, the Saviour observes, "your Father which is in heaven,"(1) he alludes to that one from whom the Son deriving his characteristics has transferred them hither. When, however, (Jesus) remarks, "Your father is a murderer from the beginning,"(2) he alludes to the Ruler and Demiurge of matter, who, appropriating the marks delivered from the Son, generated him here who from the beginning was a murderer, for his work causes corruption and death.

No one, then, he says, can be saved or return (into heaven) without the Son, and the Son is the Serpent. For as he brought down from above the paternal marks, so again he carries up from thence those marks roused from a dormant condition and rendered paternal characteristics, substantial ones from the unsubstantial Being, transferring them hither from thence. This, he says, is what is spoken: "I am the door."(3) And he transfers (those marks), he says,(4) to those who close the eyelid, as the naphtha drawing the fire in every direction towards itself; nay rather, as the magnet (attracting) the iron and not anything else, or just as the backbone of the sea falcon, the gold and nothing else, or as the chaff is led by the amber. In this manner, he says, is the portrayed, perfect, and con-substantial genus drawn again from the world by the Serpent; nor does he (attract) anything else, as it has been sent down by him. For a proof of this, they adduce the anatomy(5) of the brain, assimilating, from the fact of its immobility, the

brain itself to the Father, and the cerebellum to the Son, because of its being moved and being of the form of (the head of) a serpent. And they allege that this (cerebellum), by an ineffable and inscrutable process, attracts through the pineal gland the spiritual and life-giving substance emanating from the vaulted chamber(6) (in which the brain is embedded). And on receiving this, the cerebellum in an ineffable manner imparts the ideas, just as the Son does, to matter; or, in other words, the seeds and the genera of the things produced according to the flesh flow along into the spinal marrow. Employing this exemplar, (the heretics) seem to adroitly introduce their secret mysteries, which are delivered in silence. Now it would be impious for us to declare these; yet it is easy to form an idea of them, by reason of the many statements that have been made.



**CHAP. XIII.—THE PERATIC HERESY NOT GENERALLY KNOWN.**

But since I consider that I have plainly explained the Peratic heresy, and by many (arguments) have rendered evident (a system that hitherto) has always escaped notice, and is altogether(7) a tissue of fable, and one that disguises its own peculiar venom, it seems expedient to advance no further statement beyond those already put forward; for the opinions propounded by (the heretics) themselves are sufficient for their own condemnation.



## CHAP. XIV.—THE SYSTEM OF THE SETHIANS; THEIR TRIAD OF INFINITE PRINCIPLES; THEIR HERESY EXPLAINED; THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE INCARNATION.

Let us then see what the Sethians(8) affirm. To these it appears that there are three definite principles of the universe, and that each of these principles possesses infinite powers. And when they speak of powers(9) let him that heareth take into account that they make this statement. Everything whatsoever you discern by an act of intelligence, or also omit (to discern) as not being understood, this by nature is fitted to become each of the principles, as in the human soul every art whatsoever which is made the subject of instruction. Just for instance, he says, this child will be a musician, having waited the requisite time for (acquiring a knowledge of) the harp; or a geometrician, (having previously undergone the necessary study for acquiring a knowledge) of geometry; (or) a grammarian, (after having sufficiently studied) grammar; (or) a workman, (having acquired a practical acquaintance) with a craftsman's business; and to one brought into contact with the rest of the arts a similar occurrence will take place. Now of principles, he says, the substances are light and darkness; and of these, spirit is intermediate without admixture. The spirit, however, is that which has its appointed place in the midst of darkness which is below, and light which is above. It is not spirit as a current of wind, or some gentle breeze that can be felt; but, as it were, some odour of ointment or of incense formed out of a compound. (It is) a subtle power, that insinuates itself by means of some impulsive quality in a fragrance, which is inconceivable and better than could be expressed by words. Since, however, light is above and darkness below, and spirit is intermediate in such a way as stated between these; and since light is so constituted, that, like a ray of the sun, it shines from above upon the underlying darkness; and again, since the fragrance of the spirit, holding an intermediate place, is extended and carried in every direction, as in the case of incense—offerings placed upon fire, we detect the fragrance that is being wafted in every direction: when, I say, there is a power of this description belonging unto the principles which are classified under three divisions, the power of spirit and light simultaneously exists in the darkness that is situated underneath them. But the darkness is a terrible water, into which light is absorbed and translated into a nature of the same description with spirit. The darkness, however, is not devoid of intelligence, but altogether reflective, and is conscious that, where the light has been abstracted from the darkness, the darkness remains isolated, invisible, obscure, impotent, inoperative, (and) feeble. Wherefore it is constrained, by all its reflection and understanding, to collect into itself the lustre and scintillation of light with the fragrance of the spirit. And it is possible to behold an image of the nature of these in the human countenance; for instance, the pupil of the eye, dark from the subjacent humours, (but) illuminated with spirit. As, then, the darkness seeks after the splendour, that it may keep in bondage the spark, and may have perceptive power, so the light and spirit seek after the power that belongs to themselves, and strive to uprear, and towards each other to carry up their intermingled powers into the dark and formidable water lying underneath.

But all the powers of the three originating principles, which are as regards number indefinitely infinite, are each according to its own substance reflective and intelligent, unnumbered in multitude. And since what are reflective and intelligent are numberless in multitude, while they continue by themselves, they are all at rest. If, however, power approaches power, the dissimilarity of (what is set in) juxtaposition produces a certain motion and energy, which are formed from the motion resulting from the concurrence effected by the juxtaposition of the coalescing powers. For the concurrence of the powers ensues, just like any mark of a seal that is impressed by means of the concurrence correspondingly with (the seal) which prints the figure on the substances that are brought up (into contact with it). Since, therefore, the powers of the three principles are infinite in number, and from infinite powers (arise) infinite concourses, images of infinite seals are necessarily produced. These images, therefore, are the forms of the different sorts of animals. From the first great concurrence, then, of the three principles, ensues a certain great form, a seal of heaven and earth. The heaven and the earth have a figure similar to the womb, having a navel in the midst; and if, he says, any one is desirous of bringing this figure under the organ of vision, let him artfully scrutinize the pregnant womb of whatsoever animal he wishes, and he will discover an image of the heaven and the earth, and of the things which in the midst of all are unalterably situated

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

underneath.

(And so it is, that the first great concourse of the three principles) has produced such a figure of heaven and earth as is similar to a womb after the first coition. But, again, in the midst of the heaven and the earth have been generated infinite concourses of powers. And each concourse did not effect and fashion anything else than a seal of heaven and earth similar to a womb. But, again, in the earth, from the infinite seals are produced infinite crowds of various animals. But into all this infinity of the different animals under heaven is diffused and distributed, along with the light, the fragrance of the Spirit from above. From the water, therefore, has been produced a first—begotten originating principle, viz., wind, (which is) violent and boisterous, and a cause of all generation. For producing a sort of ferment in the waters, (the wind) uplifts waves out of the waters; and the motion(2) of the waves, just as when some impulsive power of pregnancy is the origin of the production of a man or mind,(3) is caused when (the ocean), excited by the impulsive power of spirit, is propelled forward. When, however, this wave that has been raised out of the water by the wind, and rendered pregnant in its nature, has within itself obtained the power, possessed by the female, of generation, it holds together the light scattered from above along with the fragrance of the spirit—that is, mind moulded in the different species. And this (light) is a perfect God, who from the unbegotten radiance above, and from the spirit, is borne down into human nature as into a temple, by the impulsive power of Nature, and by the motion of wind. And it is produced from water being commingled(1) and blended with bodies as if it were a salt(2) of existent things, and a light of darkness. And it struggles to be released from bodies, and is not able to find liberation and an egress for itself For a very diminutive spark, a severed splinter from above like the ray of a star, has been mingled in the much compounded waters of many (existences),(3) as, says he, (David) remarks in a psalm.(4) Every thought, then, and solicitude actuating the supernal light is as to how and in what manner mind may be liberated, by the death of the depraved and dark body, from the Father that is below, which is the wind that with noise(5) and tumult uplifted the waves, and who generated a perfect mind his own Son; not, however, being his peculiar (offspring) substantially. For he was a ray (sent down) from above, from that perfect light, (and) was overpowered in the dark,(6) and formidable, and bitter, and defiled water; and he is a luminous spirit borne down over the water.(7) When, therefore, the waves that have been upheared from the waters have received within themselves the power of generation possessed by females, they contain, as a certain womb, in different species, the infused radiance, so as that it is visible in the case of all animals.(8) But the wind, at the same time fierce and formidable,(9) whirling along, is, in respect of its hissing sound, like a serpent.(10)

First, then, from the wind—that is, from the serpent—has resulted the originating principle of generation in the manner declared, all things having simultaneously received the principle of generation. After, then, the light and the spirit

had been received, he says, into the polluted and baneful (and) disordered womb, the serpent—the wind of the darkness, the first—begotten of the waters—enters within and produces man, and the impure womb neither loves nor recognises any other form. The perfect Word of supernal light being therefore assimilated (in form) to the beast, (that is,) the serpent, entered into the defiled womb, having deceived (the womb) through the similitude of the beast itself, in order that (the Word) may loose the chains that encircle the perfect mind which has been begotten amidst impurity of womb by the primal offspring of water, (namely,) serpent, wind, (and) beast.(11) This, he says, is the form of the servant,(12) and this the necessity of the Word of God coming down into the womb of a virgin. But he says it is not sufficient that the Perfect Man, the Word, has entered into the womb of a virgin, and loosed the pangs(13) which were in that darkness. Nay, more than this was requisite; for after his entrance(14) into the foul mysteries of the womb, he was washed, and drank of the cup of life—giving bubbling water.(15) And it was altogether needful that he should drink who was about to strip off the servile form, and assume celestial raiment.

**CHAP. XV.—THE SETHIANS SUPPORT THEIR DOCTRINES BY AN ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE; THEIR SYSTEM REALLY DERIVED FROM NATURAL PHILOSOPHERS AND FROM THE ORPHIC RITES; ADOPT THE HOMERIC COSMOGONY.**

These are the statements which the patrons(16) of the Sethian doctrines make, as far as it is possible to declare in a few words. Their system, however, is made up (of tenets) from natural (philosophers), and of expressions uttered in reference to different other subjects; and transferring (the sense of) these to the Eternal(17) Logos, they explain them as we have declared. But they assert likewise that Moses confirms their doctrine when he says, "Darkness, and mist, and tempest." These, (the Sethian) says, are the three principles (of our system); or when he states that three were born in paradise—Adam, Eve, the serpent; or when he speaks of three (persons, namely) Cain, Abel, Seth; and again of three (others)—Shem, Ham,(1) Japheth; or when he mentions three patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; or when he speaks of the existence of three days before sun and moon; or when he mentions three laws—prohibitory, permissive, and adjudicatory of punishment. Now, a prohibitory law is as follows: "Of every tree that is in paradise thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou mayest not eat."(2) But in the passage, "Come forth from thy land and from thy kindred, and hither into a land which I shall show thee,"(3) this law, he says, is permissive; for one who is so disposed may depart, and one who is not so disposed may remain. But a law adjudicatory of punishment is that which makes the following declaration: "Thou shall not commit adultery, thou shall not kill, thou shall not steal;"(4) for a penalty is awarded to each of these acts of wickedness.

The entire system of their doctrine, however, is (derived) from(5) the ancient theologians Musaeus, and Linus, and Orpheus,(6) who elucidates especially the ceremonies of initiation, as well as the mysteries themselves. For their doctrine concerning the womb is also the tenet of Orpheus; and the (idea of the) navel,(7) which is harmony,(8) is (to be found) with the same symbolism attached to it in the Bacchanalian orgies of Orpheus. But prior to the observance of the mystic rite of Celeus, and Triptolemus, and Ceres, and Proserpine, and Bacchus in Eleusis, these orgies have been celebrated and handed down to men in Phlium of Attica.(9) For antecedent to the Eleusinian mysteries, there are (enacted) in Phlium the orgies(10) of her denominated the "Great (Mother)." There is, however, a portico in this (city), and on the portico is inscribed a representation, (visible) up to the present day, of all the words which are spoken (on such occasions). Many, then, of the words inscribed upon that portico are those respecting

which Plutarch institutes discussions in his ten books against(11) Empedocles. And in the greater(12) number of these books is also drawn the representation of a certain aged man, grey-haired, winged,(13) having his pudendum erectum, pursuing a retreating woman of azure colour. (14) And over the aged man is the inscription "phaos ruentes," and over the woman "pereaphicola."(15) But "phaos ruentes"(16) appears to be the light (which exists), according to the doctrine of the Sethians, and "phicola" the darkish water; while the space in the midst of these seems to be a harmony constituted from the spirit that is placed between. The name, however, of "phaos ruentes" manifests, as they allege, the flow from above of the light downwards. Wherefore one may reasonably assert that the Sethians celebrate rites among themselves, very closely bordering upon those orgies of the "Great (Mother)" which are observed among) the Phliasians. And the poet likewise seems to bear his testimony to this triple division, when he remarks, "And all things have been triply divided, and everything obtains its (proper) distinction;"(17) that is, each member of the threefold division has obtained (a particular) capacity. But now, as regards the tenet that the subjacent water below, which is dark, ought, because the light has set (over it), to convey upwards and receive the spark borne clown from (the light) itself; in the assertion of this tenet. I say, the all-wise Sethians appear to derive (their opinion) from Homer:—

"By earth I swear, and yon broad Heaven above,  
And Stygian stream beneath, the weightiest oath  
Of solemn power, to bind the blessed gods."(18)

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

That is, according to Homer, the gods suppose water to be loathsome and horrible. Now, similar to this is the doctrine of the Sethians, which affirms (water) to be formidable to the mind.(19)

## CHAP. XVI.—THE SETHIAN THEORY CONCERNING "MIXTURE" AND "COMPOSITION;" APPLICATION OF IT TO CHRIST; ILLUSTRATION FROM THE WELL OF AMPA.

These, and other assertions similar to these, are made (by the Sethians) in their interminable commentaries. They, however, persuade their disciples to become conversant with the theory respecting composition and mixture. But this theory has formed a subject of meditation to many, but (among others) also to Andronicus the Peripatetic. The Sethians, then, affirm that the theory concerning composition and mixture is constituted according to the following method: The luminous ray from above is intermingled, and the very diminutive spark is delicately blended in the dark waters beneath; and (both of these) become united, and are formed into one compound mass, just as a single savour (results) from the mixture of many incense-offerings in the fire, and (just as) an adept, by having a test in an acute sense of smell, ought to be able from the single odour of the incense to distinguish accurately each (ingredient) of the incense-offerings that have been mingled in the fire,—whether, for example, storax, and myrrh, and frankincense, or whatever other (ingredient) may be mixed (in the incense). They, however, employ also other examples, saying both that brass is mixed with gold, and that some art has been discovered which separates the brass from the gold. And, in like manner, if tin or brass, or any substance homogeneous with it, be discovered mixed with silver, these likewise, by some art superior to that of mixing, are distinguished. But already some one also distinguishes water mingled with wine.(1) So, say they, though all things are commingled, they are capable of being separated. Nay, but, he says, derive the same lesson from the case of animals. For when the animal is dead, each of its parts is separated; and when dissolution takes place, the animal in this way vanishes. This is, he says, what has been spoken: "I came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword,"(2)—that is, the division and separation of the things that have been commingled. For each of the things that have been commingled is separated and divided when it reaches its proper place. For as there is one place of mixture for all animals, so also has there been established one (locality) of separation. And, he says, no one is aware of this (place), save we alone that have been born again, spiritual, not carnal, whose citizenship is in heaven above.

In this manner insinuating themselves, they corrupt their pupils, partly by misusing the words spoken (by themselves), while they wickedly pervert, to serve any purpose they wish, what has been admirably said (in Scripture); and

partly by concealing their nefarious conduct, by means of whatever comparisons they please. All these things, then, he says, that have been com-mingled, possess, as has been declared, their own particular place, and hurry towards their own peculiar (substances), as iron towards the magnet, and the chaff to the vicinity of amber, and the gold to the spur(3) of the sea falcon. In like manner, the ray(4) of light which has been com-mingled with the water, having obtained from discipline and instruction its own proper locality, hastens towards the Logos that comes from above in servile form; and along with the Logos exists as a logos in that place where the Logos is still: (the light, I say, hastens to the Logos with greater speed) than the iron towards the magnet.

And that these things, he says, are so, and that all things that have been commingled are separated in their proper places, learn. There is among the Persians in a city Ampa,(5) near the river Tills, a well; and near the well, at the top, has been constructed a certain reservoir, supplied with three outlets; and when one pumps from this well, and draws off some of its contents in a vessel, what is thus pumped out of the well, whatever it is at all, he pours into the reservoir hard by. And when what is thus infused reaches the outlets, and when what is taken up (out of each outlet) in a single vessel is examined, a separation is observed to have taken place. And in the first of the outlets is exhibited a concretion of salt, and in the second of asphalt, and in the third of oil; and the oil is black, just as, he says, Herodotus(6) also narrates, and it yields a heavy smell, and the Persians call this "rhadinace." The similitude of the well is, say the Sethians, more sufficient for the demonstration of their proposition than all the statements that have been previously made.

**CHAP. XVII.—THE SETHIAN DOCTRINES TO BE LEARNED FROM THE  
"PARAPHRASE OF SETH."**

The opinion of the Sethians appears to us to have been sufficiently elucidated. If, however, any one is desirous of learning the entire doctrine according to them, let him read a book inscribed Paraphrase of Seth; for all their secret tenets he will find deposited there. But since we have explained the opinions entertained by the Sethians, let us see also what are the doctrines advanced by Justinus.

## CHAP. XVIII.—THE SYSTEM OF JUSTINUS ANTISCRIPITURAL AND ESSENTIALLY PAGAN.

Justinus(1) was entirely opposed to the teaching of the holy Scriptures, and moreover to the written or oral teaching of the blessed evangelists, according as the Logos was accustomed to instruct His disciples, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles;"(2) and this signifies that they should not attend to the futile doctrine of the Gentiles. This (heretic) endeavours to lead on his hearers into an acknowledgment of prodigies detailed by the Gentiles, and of doctrines inculcated by them. And he narrates, word for word, legendary accounts prevalent among the Greeks, and does not previously teach or deliver his perfect mystery, unless he has bound his dupe by an oath. Then he brings forward (these) fables for the purpose of persuasion, in order that they who are conversant with the incalculable trifling of these books may have some consolation in the details of these legends. Thus it happens as when in like manner one making a long journey deems it expedient, on having fallen in with an inn, to take repose. And so it is that, when once more they are induced to turn towards studying the diffuse doctrine of these lectures, they may not abhor them while they, undergoing instruction unnecessarily prolix, rush stupified into the transgression devised by (Justinus); and previously he binds his followers with horrible oaths, neither to publish nor abjure these doctrines, and forces upon them an acknowledgment (of their truth). And in this manner he delivers the mysteries impiously discovered by himself, partly, according to the statements previously made, availing himself of the Hellenic legends, and partly of those pretended books which, to some extent, bear a resemblance to the foresaid heresies. For all, forced together by one spirit, are drawn into one profound abyss of pollution, inculcating the same tenets, and detailing the same legends, each after a different method. All those, however, style themselves Gnostics in this peculiar sense, that they alone themselves have imbibed the marvellous knowledge of the Perfect and Good (Being).

## CHAP. XIX.—THE JUSTINIAN HERESY UNFOLDED IN THE "BOOK OF BARUCH."

But swear, says Justinus, if you wish to know "what eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and the things which have not entered into the heart;"(3) that is, if you wish to know Him who is good above all, Him who is more exalted, (swear) that you will preserve the secrets (of the Justinian) discipline, as intended to be kept silent. For also our Father, on beholding the Good One, and on being initiated with Him, preserved the mysteries respecting which silence is enjoined, and sware, as it has been written, "The Lord sware, and will not repent."(4) Having, then, in this way set the seal to these tenets, he seeks to inveigle (his followers) with more legends, (which are detailed) through a greater number of books; and so he conducts (his readers) to the Good One, consummating the initiated (by admitting them into) the unspeakable Mysteries.(5) In order, however, that we may not wade through more of their volumes, we shall illustrate the ineffable Mysteries (of Justinus) from one book of his, inasmuch as, according to his supposition, it is (a work) of high repute. Now this volume is inscribed Baruch; and one fabulous account out of many which is explained by (Justinus) in this (volume), we shall point out, inasmuch as it is to be found in Herodotus. But after imparting a different shape to this (account), he explains it to his pupils as if it were something novel, being under the impression that the entire arrangement of his doctrine (springs) out of it.



## CHAP. XX.—THE COSMOGONY OF JUSTINUS AN ALLEGORICAL EXPLANATION OF HERODOTUS' LEGEND OF HERCULES.

Herodotus,(6) then, asserts that Hercules, when driving the oxen of Geryon from Erytheia,(7) came into Scythia, and that, being wearied with travel—ling, he retired into some desert spot and slept for a short time. But while he slumbered his horse disappeared, seated on which he had performed his lengthened journey. On being aroused from repose, he, however, instituted a diligent search through the desert, endeavouring to discover his horse. And though he is unsuccessful in his search after the horse, he yet finds in the desert a certain damsel, half of whose form was that of woman, and proceeded to question her if she had seen the horse anywhere. The girl, however, replies that she had seen (the animal), but that she would not show him unless Hercules previously would come along with her for the purpose of sexual intercourse. Now Herodotus informs us that her upper parts as far as the groin were those of a virgin, but that everything below the body after the groin presented some horrible appearance of a snake. In anxiety, however, for the discovery of his horse, Hercules complies with the monster's request; for he knew her (carnally), and made her pregnant. And he foretold, after coition, that she had by him in her womb three children at the same time, who were destined to become illustrious. And he ordered that she, on bringing forth, should impose on the children as soon as born the following names: Agathyrus, Gelonus, and Scytha. And as the reward of this (favour) receiving his horse from the beast—like damsel, he went on his way, taking with him the cattle also. But after these (details), Herodotus has a protracted account; adieu, however, to it for the present.(1) But what the opinions are of Justinus, who transfers this legend into (his account of) the generation of the universe, we shall explain.

## CHAP. XXI.—JUSTINUS' TRIAD OF PRINCIPLES; HIS ANGELOGRAPHY FOUNDED ON THIS TRIAD; HIS EXPLANATION OF THE BIRTH, LIFE, AND DEATH OF OUR LORD.

This (heresiarch) makes the following statement. There are three unbegotten principles of the universe, two male (and) one female. Of the male (principles), however, a certain one, is denominated good, and it alone is called after this manner, and possesses a power of prescience concerning the universe. But the other is father(2) of all begotten things, devoid of prescience,(3) and invisible. And the female (principle) is devoid of prescience, passionate, two-minded,(4) two-bodied, in every respect answering (the description of) the girl in the legend of Herodotus, as far as the groin a virgin, and (in) the parts below (resembling) a snake, as Justinus says. But this girl is styled Edem and Israel. And these principles of the universe are, he says, roots and fountains from which existing things have been produced, but that there was not anything else. The Father, then, who is devoid of prescience, beholding that half-woman Edem, passed into a concupiscent desire for her. But this Father, he says, is called Elohim. Not less did Edem also long for Elohim, and the mutual passion brought them together into the one nuptial couch of love.(5)

And from such an intercourse the Father generates out of Edem unto himself twelve angels. And the names of the angels begotten by the Father are these: Michael, Amen,(6) Baruch, Gabriel, Esaddaeus. ... And of the maternal angels which Edem brought forth, the names in like manner have been subjoined, and they are as follows: Babel,(7) Achamoth, Naas, Bel, Belias, Satan, Sael, Adonaeus, Leviathan,(8) Pharao, Carcamenos, (and) Lathen.

Of these twenty-four angels the paternal ones are associated with the Father, and do all things according to His will; and the maternal (angels are associated with) Edem the Mother. And the multitude of all these angels together is Paradise, he says, concerning which Moses speaks: "God planted a garden in Eden towards the east,"(9) that is, towards the face of Edem, that Edem might behold the garden—that is, the angels—continually. Allegorically the angels are styled trees of this garden, and the tree of life is the third of the paternal angels—Baruch. And the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the third of the maternal angels—Naas. For so,(10) says (Justinus), one ought to interpret the words of Moses, observing, "Moses said these things disguisedly, from the fact that all do not attain the truth." And, he says, Paradise being formed from the conjugal joy of Elohim and Edem, the angels of Elohim receiving from the most beauteous earth, that is, not from tile portion of Edem resembling a monster, but from the parts above the groin of human shape, and gentle—in aspect,—make man out of the earth. But out of the parts resembling a monster are produced wild beasts, and the rest of the animal creation. They made man, therefore, as a symbol of the unity and love (subsisting) between them; and they depute their own powers unto him, Edem the soul, but Elohim the spirit. And the man Adam is produced as some actual seal and memento of love, and as an everlasting emblem of the marriage of Edem and Elohim. And in like manner also Eve was produced, he says, as Moses has described, an image and emblem (as well as) a seal, to be preserved for ever, of Edem. And in like manner also a soul was deposited in Eve,—an image—from Edem, but a spirit from Elohim. And there were given to them commandments, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,"(11) that is, Edem; for so he wishes that it had been written. For the entire of the power belonging unto herself, Edem conferred upon Elohim as a sort of nuptial dowry. Whence, he says, from imitation of that primary marriage up to this day, women bring a dowry to their husbands, complying with a certain divine and paternal law that came into existence on the part of Edem towards Elohim.

And when all things were created as has been described by Moses—both heaven and earth, and the things therein(1)—the twelve angels of the Mother were divided into four principles, and each fourth part of them is called a river—Phison, and Gehon, and Tigris, and Euphrates, as, he says, Moses states. These twelve angels, being mutually connected, go about into four parts, and manage the world, holding from Edem a sort of viceregal(2) authority over the world. But they do not always continue in the same places, but move around as if in a circular dance, changing place after place, and at set times and intervals retiring to the localities subject to themselves. And when Phison holds sway over places, famine, distress, and affliction prevail in that part of the earth, for the battalion of these angels is niggardly. In like manner also there belong to each part of the four,

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

according to the power and nature of each, evil times and hosts of diseases. And continually, according to the dominion<sup>(3)</sup> of each fourth part, this stream of evil, just (like a current) of rivers, careers, according to the will of Edem, uninterruptedly around the world. And from some cause of this description has arisen the necessity of evil.

When Elohim had prepared and created the world as a result from joint pleasure, He wished to ascend up to the elevated parts of heaven, and to see that not anything of what pertained to the creation laboured under deficiency. And He took His Own angels with Him, for His nature was to mount aloft, leaving Edem below:<sup>(4)</sup> for inasmuch as she was earth, she was not disposed to follow upward her spouse. Elohim, then, coming to the highest part of heaven above, and beholding a light superior to that which He Himself had created, exclaimed, "Open me the gates, that entering in I may acknowledge the Lord; for I considered Myself to be Lord."<sup>(5)</sup> A voice was returned to Him from the light, saying, "This is the gate of the Lord: through this the righteous enter in."<sup>(6)</sup> And immediately the gate was opened, and the Father, without the angels, entered, (advancing) towards the Good One, and beheld "what eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and what hath not entered into the heart of man to (conceive)."<sup>(7)</sup>

Then the Good One says to him, "Sit thou on my right hand."<sup>(8)</sup> And the Father says to the Good One, "Permit me, Lord, to overturn the world which I have made, for my spirit is bound to men."<sup>(9)</sup> And I wish to receive it back (from them." Then the Good One replies to him, "No evil canst thou do while thou art with me, for both thou and Edem made the world as a result of conjugal joy. Permit Edem, then, to hold possession of the world as long as she wishes; but do you remain with me." Then Edem, knowing that she had been deserted by Elohim, was seized with grief, and placed beside herself her own angels. And she adorned herself after a comely fashion, if by any means Elohim, passing into concupiscent desire, might descend (from heaven) to her. When, however, Elohim, overpowered by the Good One, no longer descended to Edem, Edem commanded Babel, which is Venus, to cause adulteries and dissolutions of marriages among men. (And she adopted this expedient) in order that, as she had been divorced from Elohim, so also the spirit of Elohim, which is in men, being wrong with sorrow, might be punished by such separations, and might undergo precisely the sufferings which (were being endured by) the deserted Edem. And Edem gives great power to her third angel, Naas, that by every species of punishment she might chasten the spirit of Elohim which is in men, in order that Elohim, through the spirit, might be punished for having deserted his spouse, in violation of the agreements entered into between them. Elohim the father, seeing these things, sends forth Baruch, the third angel among his own, to succour the spirit that is in all men.<sup>(10)</sup> Baruch then coming, stood in the midst of the angels of Edem, that is, in the midst of paradise—for paradise is the angels, in the midst of whom he stood,—and issued to the man the following injunction: "Of every tree that is in paradise thou mayest freely eat, but thou mayest not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,"<sup>(11)</sup> which is Naas. Now the meaning is, that he should obey the rest of the eleven angels of Edem, for the eleven possess passions, but are not guilty of transgression. Naas, however, has committed sin, for he went in unto Eve, deceiving her, and debauched her; and (such an act as) this is a violation of law. He, however, likewise went in unto Adam, and had unnatural intercourse with him; and this is itself also a piece of turpitude, whence have arisen adultery and sodomy.

Henceforward vice and virtue were prevalent among men, arising from a single source—that of the Father. For the Father having ascended to the Good One, points out from time to time the way to those desirous of ascending (to him likewise). After having, however, departed from Edem, he caused an originating principle of evil for the spirit of the Father that is in men.<sup>(1)</sup> Baruch therefore was despatched to Moses, and through him spoke to the children of Israel, that they might be converted unto the Good One. But the third angel (Naas), by the soul which came from Edem upon Moses, as also upon all men, obscured the precepts of Baruch, and caused his own peculiar injunctions to be hearkened unto. For this reason the soul is arrayed against the spirit, and the spirit against the soul.<sup>(2)</sup> For the soul is Edem, but the spirit Elohim, and each of these exists in all men, both females and males. Again, after these (occurrences), Baruch was sent to the Prophets, that through the Prophets the spirit that dwelleth in men<sup>(3)</sup> might hear (words of warning), and might avoid Edem and the wicked fiction, just as the Father had fled from Elohim. In like manner also—by the prophets<sup>(4)</sup>—Naas, by a similar device, through the soul<sup>(5)</sup> that dwells in man, along with the spirit of the Father, enticed away the prophets, and all (of them) were allured after him, and did not follow the words of Baruch, which Elohim enjoined.

Ultimately Elohim selected Hercules, an uncircumcised prophet, and sent him to quell the twelve angels of Edem, and release the Father from the twelve angels, those wicked ones of the creation. These are the twelve

## The Refutation of All Heresies, Book 5

conflicts of Hercules which Hercules underwent, in order, from first to last, viz., Lion, and Hydra, and Boar, and the others successively. For they say that these are the names (of them) among the Gentiles, and they have been derived with altered denominations from the energy of the maternal angels. When he seemed to have vanquished his antagonists, Omphale—now she is Babel or Venus—clings to him and entices away Hercules, and divests him of his power, viz., the commands of Baruch which Elohim issued. And in place (of this power, Babel) envelopes him in her own peculiar robe, that is, in the power of Edem, who is the power below; and in this way the prophecy of Hercules remained unfulfilled, and his works.

Finally, however, in the days of Herod the king, Baruch is despatched, being sent down once more by Elohim; and coming to Nazareth, he found Jesus, son of Joseph and Mary, a child of twelve years, feeding sheep. And he announces to him all things from the beginning, whatsoever had been done by Edem and Elohim, and whatsoever would be likely to take place hereafter, and spoke the following words: "All the prophets anterior to you have been enticed. Put forth an effort, therefore, Jesus, Son of man, not to be allured, but preach this word unto men, and carry back tidings to them of things pertaining to the Father, and things pertaining to the Good One, and ascend to the Good One, and sit there with Elohim, Father of us all." And Jesus was obedient unto the angel, saying that, "I shall do all things, Lord," and proceeded to preach. Naas therefore wished to entice this one also. (Jesus, however, was not disposed to listen to his overtures(6)), for he remained faithful to Baruch. Therefore Naas, being inflamed with anger because he was not able to seduce him, caused him to be crucified. He, however, leaving the body of Edem on the (accursed) tree, ascended to the Good One; saying, however, to Edem, "Woman, thou retainest thy son,"(7) that is, the natural and the earthly man. But (Jesus) himself commending his spirit into the hands of the Father, ascended to the Good One. Now the Good One is Priapus, (and) he it is who antecedently caused the production of everything that exists. On this account he is styled Priapus, because he previously fashioned all things (according to his own design). For this reason, he says, in every temple is placed his statue, which is revered by every creature; and (there are images of him) in the highways, carrying over his head ripened fruits, that is, the produce of the creation, of which he is the cause, having in the first instance formed, (according to His own design), the creation, when as yet it had no existence. When, therefore, he says, you hear men asserting that the swan went in unto Leda, and begat a child from her, (learn that) the swan is Elohim, and Leda Edem. And when people allege that an eagle went in unto Ganymede, (know that) the eagle is Naas, and Ganymede Adam. And when they assert that gold (in a shower) went in unto Danae and begat a child from her, (recollect that) the gold is Elohim, and Danae is Edem. And similarly, in the same manner adducing all accounts of this description, which correspond with (the nature of) legends, they pursue the work of instruction. When, therefore, the prophet says, "Hearken, O heaven, and give ear, O earth; the Lord hath spoken," he means by heaven, (Justinus) says, the spirit which is in man from Elohim; and by earth, the soul which is in man along with the spirit; and by Lord, Baruch; and by Israel, Edem, for Israel as well as Edem is called the spouse of Elohim. "Israel," he says, "did not know me (Elohim); for had he known me, that I am with the Good One, he would not have punished through paternal ignorance the spirit which is in men."

## CHAP. XXII.—OATH USED BY THE JUSTINIAN HERETICS; THE BOOK OF BARUCH; THE REPERTORY OF THEIR SYSTEM.

Hence(1) also, in the first book inscribed "Baruch," has been written the oath which they compel those to swear who are about to hear these mysteries, and be initiated with the Good One.(2) And this oath, (Justinus) says, our Father Elohim sware when He was beside the Good One, and having sworn He did not repent (of the oath), respecting which, he says, it has been written, "The Lord sware, and will not repent."(3) Now the oath is couched in these(4) terms: "I swear by that Good One who is above all, to guard these mysteries, and to divulge them to no one, and not to relapse from the Good One to the creature." And when he has sworn this oath, he goes on to the Good One, and beholds "whatever things eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man;"(5) and he drinks from life-giving water, which is to them, as they suppose, a bath,(6) a fountain of life-giving, bubbling water.(7) For there has been a separation made between water and water; and there is water, that below the firmament of the wicked creation, in which earthly and animal men are washed; and there is life-giving water, (that) above the firmament,(8) of the Good One, in which spiritual (and) living men are washed; and in this Elohim washed Himself. and having washed did not repent. And when, he says, the prophet affirms, "Take unto yourself a wife of whoredom, since the earth has abandoned itself to fornication, (departing) from (following) after the Lord;"(9) that is, Edem (departs) from Elohim. (Now) in these words, he says, the prophet clearly declares the entire mystery, and is not hearkened unto by reason of the wicked machinations of Naas. According to that same manner, they deliver other prophetic passages in a similar spirit of interpretation throughout numerous books. The volume, however, inscribed "Baruch," is pre-eminently to them the one in which the reader(10) will ascertain the entire explanation of their legendary system (to be contained). Beloved, though I have encountered many heresies, yet with no wicked (heresiarch) worse than this (Justinus) has it been my lot to meet. But, in truth, (the followers of Justinus) ought to imitate(11) the example of his Hercules, and to cleanse, as the saying is, the cattle-shed of Augias, or rather I should say, a ditch,(12) into which, as soon as the adherents of this (heresiarch) have fallen, they can never be cleansed; nay, they will not be able even to raise their heads.

## **CHAP. XXIII.—SUBSEQUENT HERESIES DEDUCIBLE FROM THE SYSTEM OF JUSTINUS.**

Since, then, we have explained the attempts (at a system) of the pseudo-gnostic Justinus, it appears likewise expedient in the following books to elucidate the opinions put forward in heresies following (in the way of consequence upon the doctrines of Justinus), and to leave not a single one of these (speculators) unrefuted. Our refutation will be accomplished by adducing the assertions made by them; such (at least of their statements) as are sufficient for making a public example (of these heretics). (And we shall attain our purpose), even though there should only be condemned(13) the secret and ineffable (mysteries) practised amongst them, into which, silly mortals that they are, scarcely (even) with considerable labour are they initiated. Let us then see what also Simon affirms.