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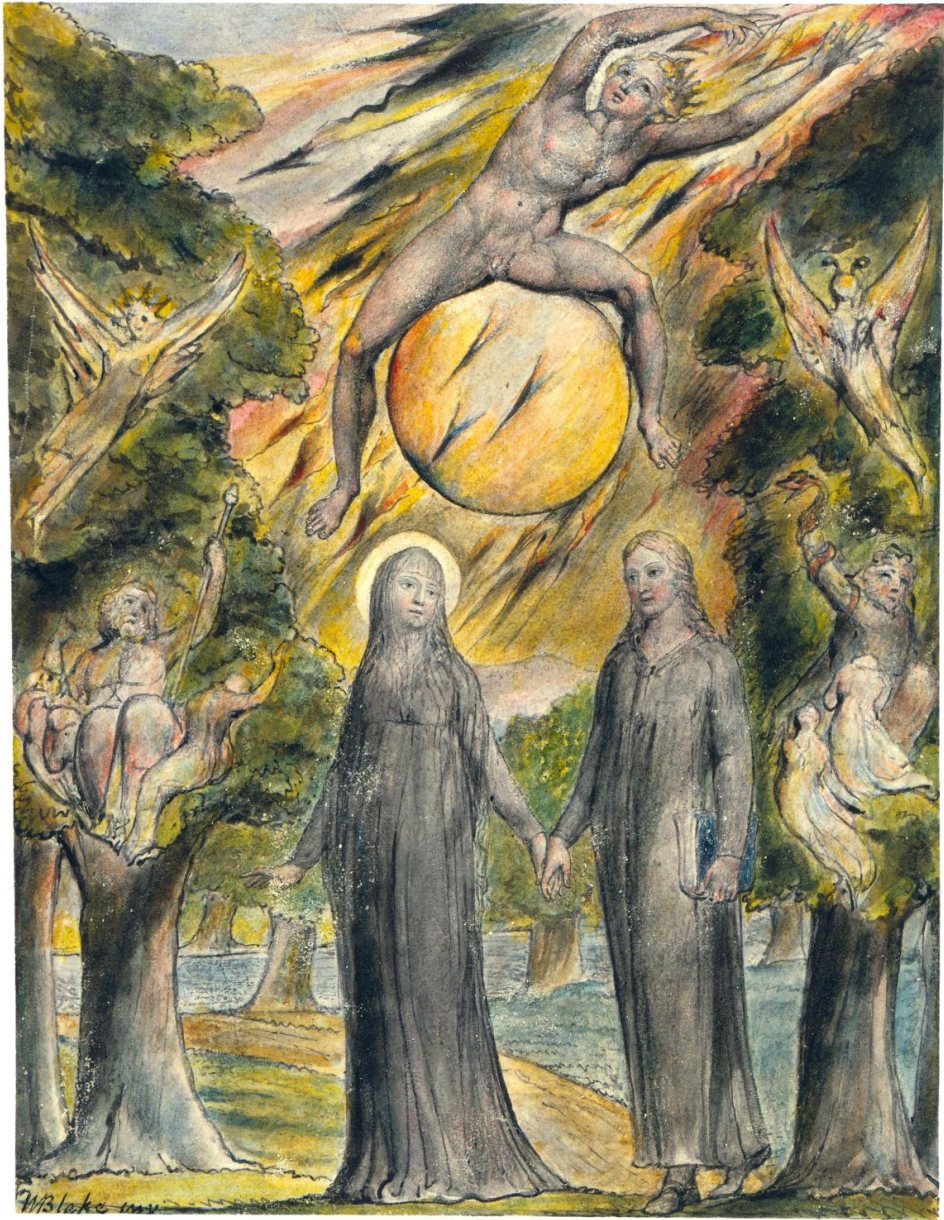
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the realm of magic and the occult. It is a ritual process in which the initiate's mind and vision is purified so that they might behold and "see" the majesty of the gods, through consecrations, prayers, unintelligible incantations (like the Christian charisma of speaking in tongues), and various meditative practices. The aim of theurgy is fundamentally different than the other Greek differentiation of magic of "goetia". Stephen Skinner in *Techniques of Graeco-Egyptian Magic* writes (p. 10):

The Greeks made a clear distinction between goetia (γοητεία) the magic of the goes (γόης), and that of theurgia (θεουργία). It is difficult to be sure of what was exactly meant by the ancient Greeks when they used the term γοητεία, as it was associated with rites for the dead. Goetia (γοητεία) and goes (γόης) were later used in the sense they acquired in the Latin grimoires of 'dealing with spirits,' rather than in the sense outlined in Johnston of 'dealing with the dead.'

Theurgia is a quite separate category, and is a descendant, via Porphyry and Iamblichus of Chalcis, of the ancient Mysteries. This usage has persisted through to 13th century (and later) grimoires. It has been suggested that theurgia, meaning "divine work," was a term that might even have been invented by the group of Neoplatonically inclined magicians, including luminaries like Iamblichus, probably based in Alexandria around the 2nd century CE. The theurgists were concerned with purifying and raising the consciousness of individual practitioners to the point where they could have direct communion with the gods. The theurgists were in a sense the inheritors of the ancient Greek Mysteries which aimed to introduce the candidate directly to the gods.

Iamblichus was one such Theurgist. He was a Syrian-born descendant (roughly around 250-330 in Chalcis, Coele-Syria) of a long of royal priest-kings and was known throughout his life as an incredibly wise and saintly man. However, the guy did not live a life of poverty and was actually quite wealthy, just as was many of his Gnostic predecessors (although there is no evidence that Iamblichus was a "Gnostic" in the purest sense). His wealth allowed him to be a full-time student of magic and philosophy, unrestrained by the worries of common folk and peasants. He had slaves that tended to his material needs (which were eventually set free after short intervals of service), while he dedicated his life to Neo-Platonic and Pythagorean mysteries at the best academies and schools that Syria had to offer.

Iamblichus' teachers included Anatolius and the Neo-Platonic scholar, Porphyry of Tyre (a pun on the Phoenician royal colors of purple and gold). Iamblichus was an ardent supporter for theurgy, essentially teaching that it was the only way for the salvation of the soul, from its descent into the embodiment in matter. Porphyry was born in the same capital city of Phoenicia that Simon Magus was said to have found his prostitute wife, Helena and redeemed her. Porphyry once wrote a scathing treatise called *Against the Christians*, which was a rather aggravated text that explained certain logical flaws in the philosophies and behaviors of the contemporary Christians, much like his predecessor Celsus did in the *True Doctrine*. It is said that Porphyry was not criticizing Christ but criticizing the Christians, the same sect of believers that Celsus describes as a diabolical secret society working against the Roman Empire as well as Julian the Apostate, who declares them as simply "Galileans." In his work on the *Philosophy of Oracles*, Porphyry says of Christ, as quoted by St. Augustine ("De Civitate Dei," l. xix. cap. 23; comp. also Eusebius' "Demonst. Evang.," iii. 6):—

The oracle declared Christ to be a most pious man, and his soul, like the soul of other pious men after death, favored with immortality; and that the mistaken Christians worship him. And when we asked, Why, then, was he condemned? the goddess (Hecate) answered in the oracle: The body indeed is ever liable to debilitating torments; but the soul of the pious dwells in the heavenly mansion. But that soul has fatally been the occasion to many other souls to be involved in error, to whom it has not been given to acknowledge the immortal Jove. But himself is pious, and gone to heaven as other pious men do. Him, therefore, thou shalt not blaspheme; but pity the folly of men, because of the danger they are in.

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Porphyry also decries Jesus' doctrine of the Eucharist found in the *Gospel of John*, as this quote is found in Macarius, *Apocriticus* III: 15:

That saying of the Teacher is a far-famed one, which says, "Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in yourselves." Truly this saying is not merely beast-like and absurd, but is more absurd than any absurdity, and more beast-like than any fashion of a beast, that a man should taste human flesh, and drink the blood of members of the same tribe and race, and that by doing this he should have eternal life. For, tell me, if you do this, what excess of savagery do you introduce into life?

Porphyry of Tyre (ca. 232/300-305 AD) believed that a God beyond being and comprehension was accessible through the intellect and that philosophers could gain access to divinity through one's own intellectual effort in order for the soul's embodied awareness could be completely transformed by this exercise of philosophical contemplation or "theoria". To Porphyry, this was indeed the most effective path that one can sojourn to the gods by beholding this purely intellectual vision. This tradition of the Divine Vision can be found in other sources, especially in Plato's *Phaedrus*. "Theoria" or contemplation was an important part of philosophy espoused by Plato in order for the soul to ascend and gain knowledge of the "Form of the Good". Porphyry's teacher, Plotinus (they both studied in Rome, 263-269 A.D.) also believed contemplation to be a critical component into gaining "henosis" or a visionary union with the One or Monad. (See *Sententiae* 32 and *Ennead* I. 2, *Ennead* 6.9.xx, as examples of how both Porphyry and Plotinus used "theoria" to experience the non-being of the "One.")

Zeke Mazur's "[Mystical Experience, Metaphysics and Ritual in Plotinus](#)" also does a marvelous job in explaining Plotinus' ascent experiences in which the "center-point of the self" is recognizable as transcendent, but still has yet to be "paradoxically be dissolved or annihilated to attain the ultimate union" with the One. While this approach to gaining the Divine Vision was well established in the Platonic tradition and of course by Plotinus as well, it nevertheless is especially denied in Gnostic texts such as the *Apocryphon of John* and *Allogenes*, since they both characterize God as completely inaccessible by the human intellect since it is completely transcendent and alien to the material world. *Allogenes* even goes so far as to say that the knowledge of God is "not-knowing knowledge" as well as being "ignorance that sees him". And yet, the Gnostic theurgy contained in texts like *Allogenes*, has many striking parallels with their contemporaries and philosophical competitors of the time, namely Plotinus and other Neo-Platonic philosophers who were familiar with dualist groups such as the Sethians, Ophites or Archontics and argued much against them like the Church Fathers and the Orthodox Babylonian Rabbis.

Iamblichus, was actually a former student of Porphyry who likewise criticizes and attempts to refute this approach to transcendent experience by claiming it as being misguided and even delusional. To Iamblichus, the Greek philosophers of his time had lost touch with their roots of divining wisdom and disclosure from the gods—a tradition (featured in the text of the *Chaldean Oracles*) that has its roots even before the rise of the Greeks and prevalent in classical life. Iamblichus himself makes drives to a similar point that *Allogenes* in that enlightenment or divine self-realization through contemplation must be triggered by revelation:

For that element in us which is divine (theion), and intellectual (noeron) — is aroused, then, clearly in prayer, and when aroused, strives primarily towards what is like itself and joins itself to absolute perfection.

Plato, several hundred years earlier wrote in *Phaedrus* 250c something very similar in that the spiritual rapture of the initiate was emphasized while the human body was seen as a huge hindrance to the life of true philosophy:

[We] were ushered into the Mystery that we may rightly call the most blessed of all. And we

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*who celebrated it were wholly perfect...and we gazed in rapture at sacred revealed objects...
That was the ultimate Vision, and we saw it in pure light because we were pure ourselves, not
buried in this thing we are carrying around now which we call a body...*

Porphyry's philosophy and metaphysics involved Plato's "One" Being as having a counter negative existence "before the realm of Being or Intellect." This is the same as Apophatic theology, which focuses on the knowledge of the Ineffable God, the Kether or "the One" attained through negation, or a negative existence beyond all comprehension, parallel to the Qabalistic negative veils and in various Gnostic texts. Porphyry likely derived this from the Pythagorean concept of Aion. The ultimate goal of any theurgist and mystic was the soul's ascent and return to its stellar origin on the path of austerity. Iamblichus of Chalcis describes the theory and practice in his defense of theurgy in *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians*:

...it is the complete fulfilling of the arcane performances, the carrying of them through in a manner worthy of the gods and surpassing all conception, and likewise the power of the voiceless symbols which are perceived by the gods alone, that establish the Theurgic Union.

Although Iamblichus' sentiments of theurgy don't necessarily reflect the attitudes of all Gnostic groups, but it can be a helpful tool in assessing their cosmologies in which are reflective of their theurgical practices and rituals. However, it is safe to assume that not every Gnostic group participated in theurgical ritual. Iamblichus also developed an interest in Plotinus' philosophies through his Enneads. It was through this, along with the teachings of Pythagoras, along with the pagan spiritual practices of the Egyptians, Chaldeans/Babylonians, Assyrians, and even the Hebrews, all of which drew him into the realm of theurgy. This is where the Chaldaean Oracles come in, as the text was most instrumental to the development and advancing of his own philosophies. The text itself was said to be written down by Julianus the Chaldean and his son Julian the Theurgist.



Most instrumental to the development and advancement of his own philosophies and practices was his understanding of *The Chaldean Oracles*. The *Chaldaean Oracles* is a very, mystery long poem, is usually attributed to Julian the Theurgist, who is also credited by causing rain to pour as a miraculous event that saves Marcus Aurelius' troops in their campaign against the Quadi in 173 CE. Julian was the personal magician of emperor Marcus of Rome and traveled with him on his conquests, apparently offering his services in the form of advanced weather manipulation for the strategic favor of the Roman armies. It is also attributed to Zoroaster or influenced by him as his name is often found in Gnostic and Hermetic literature, especially in the Zosimos and the *Apocryphon of John*. The term "Chaldean" is hardly used to refer to these writings during this time and always was referred to as the "Sacred Oracles." Some believe that the term "Chaldean" is generally understood as a metaphorical spiritual affinity of Julian to the East, and even ancient Syria. The Oracles display a spiritual hierarchical system that has more in common with Neopythagorean, Neoplatonic and Kabbalistic traditions than they do the Zoroastrian religion. In fact, the text bears striking resemblance to earlier sources within the Gnostics, specifically the Ophite Gnostics.

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According to the [Divine Science website](#), the legends behind the two Julians also mirror other great, divine magicians such as Apollonius, Simon Magus and Jesus Christ:

Most instrumental to the development and advancement of his own philosophies and practices was his understanding of The Chaldean Oracles, a divinely inspired text written down by Julianus the Chaldean and his son Julian the Theurgist sometime in the early 2nd century (during the reign of Marcus Aurelius) in the time of Apollonius of Tyana, who could be revered as one of the greatest magicians of that millennium. So close did the feats of Apollonius come to those of Jesus Christ that he was hunted by early Christians who sought to discredit him, sometimes going as far as to proclaim him a false Messiah, much as they did with Simon. Of note however is that legend holds that Julian the Theurgist once challenged Apollonius and two other famed mages of the time to a challenge, in which the winner would be the one who first lifted the plague of a particular town. According to all accounts of this event, Julian came out the victor.

It also goes on to say that the *Chaldean Oracles* were written by both Julian's as a means to initiate those compelled into the theurgical mysteries and even claims that they, along with Iamblichus, much like Marcion and Simon Magus according to the church father Hippolytus (they are not mentioned below), were all influenced by Empedocles, apparently an initiate of Hekate.

The Chaldean Oracles were a set of instructions laid down by both Julianus and Julian for the process of initiation into the Theurgic sciences. From this text we find many of the Theurgic principles blending with hermetic principles in a day and age where no one could rightly say which was older than the other. In essence, The Chaldean Oracles likely served as a merging point for the Egyptian and early Greek hermetic sciences with the Babylonian, Assyrian and Chaldean theurgic sciences. This may have something to do with the initiation of Julian the Theurgist into the hermetic mystery schools, particularly the School of Orpheus, wherein we see an analysis of the four elements in the form of prose. This was likely coupled by the influence of an early student of Pythagoras himself, a philosopher and magus by the name of Empedocles, who would be the first to put the Pythagorean understanding of the four elements into writing as governed by the Powers of Love and Strife, that is to say, duality. Empedocles was a well known mage of his time, and an initiate of the Mysteries of Hekate, a school which was outlived and eventually pushed into the shadows by the Pythagorean, Hermetic and Orphic Mystery Schools.

True to form, both Porphyry and Iamblichus were actually well acquainted with solar-worship. In Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica (Preparation for the Gospel)*, Chapter XIV, he writes that Porphyry's work from *Philosophy from Oracles* provide astrological ritual instructions, based on the correct time to undertake based on the idea that the gods issue these instructions for worship to mortals. These ritual instructions, as common as they were in the ancient world, was intended to enable humans to align themselves and the world of man with the divine realm through the astrological bodies.

IN many cases the gods, by giving signs of their statements beforehand, show by their knowledge of the arrangement of each man's nativity that they are, if we may so say, excellent Magians and perfect astrologers. Again he said that in oracular responses Apollo spake thus:

"Invoke together Hermes and the Sun On the Sun's day, the Moon when her day comes, Kronos and Aphrodite in due turn, With silent prayers, by chiefest Magian taught, Whom all men know lord of the seven-string'd lyre."

In other words, Neoplatonic theurgists would align themselves with the cosmocrators or the planetary spheres. These beings were considered the same as the archons via Gnosticism, as we have already discussed at length in previous posts. In the second chapter of [De Mysteriis \(Theurgia](#)

or *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians*), Iamblichus quotes Porphyry and launches into an exhaustive discourse about various divine beings and even admits there being the conflated nature of the gods and the daemons:

In what does a dæmon differ from a hero or half-god or from a soul? It is it in essence, in power, or in energy?

What is the token (at the Sacred Rites) of the presence of a god or an angel, or an archangel, or a dæmon, or of some archon, or a soul?

For it is a common thing with the gods and dæmons alike, and with all the superior races, to speak boastfully and to project an unreal image into view. Hence the race of the gods is thus made to seem to be in no respect superior to that of the dæmons.

In a footnote, the translator writes about this interesting exchange:

Here Porphyry has given an ancient classification of spiritual beings into four orders, the gods, dæmons or guardians, the heroes or half-gods, and souls. There were other distinctions in the Eastern countries, and we find Abammon, the Teacher, adding to these the archangels, angels, and archons of both the higher and lower nature. These were named in several of the Gnostic categories that were extant at that period. "We have no conflict with blood and flesh," says the Christian apostle, "but with archonates, authorities, the world-rulers of this dark region, and spiritual forces of evil in the upper heavens."

Iamblichus's archonology is quite interesting here. His cosmic archons, in contrast with the Gnostic cosmocrators, are not evil. Rather, it is they who govern the Personal Daimon of the initiate, and it is only through their intermediary nature that this being is to be evoked. Iamblichus' hylic archons are described in less pleasant terms, but are still not malevolent. He also draws a careful distinction between archangels and archons as well.

I will, therefore, in a single statement lay down the proposition that the apparitions are in accord with their essences, powers and energies. For such as they are as such do they manifest themselves to those who are making the invocations; and they not only exhibit energies and forms which are characteristic of themselves, but they likewise display their own particular tokens. In order, however, to draw the distinctions minutely, this is the explanation: The spectral forms of the gods are uniform; those of the dæmons are diversified; those of the angels are more simple in appearance than those belonging to the dæmons, but inferior to those of the gods; those of the archangels approach nearer to the divine Causes; those of the archons — if those that have charge of the sublunary elements seem to thee to be the lords of the world — will be diversified but arranged in proper order; but if they are princes of the region of Matter, they will not only be more diversified but much more imperfect than the others; and those of the souls will appear in every kind of style.

In the (Epoptic) Vision the figures of the gods shine brilliantly; those of the archangels are awe-inspiring and yet gentle; those of the angels are milder; those of the dæmons are alarming. Those of the half-gods, although these are left out in your question, yet there should be an answer for the sake of the truth because they are more gentle than those of the dæmons. Those of the archons are terrifying to the Beholders, if they are the archons of the universe; and hurtful and distressing, if they are of the realm of Matter. The figures of the souls are similar to those of the half-gods except that they are inferior to them.

The "Beholders" here are actually the initiates of theurgy. What exactly is Iamblichus trying to say? Since it is clear that he is a sun worshiper, like Porphyry, it becomes rather clear that he also exalts the Demiurge, although in an in-direct manner, when he discusses the "Egyptian Theosophers" in

Chapter 8 of *De Mysteriis*:

For these men perceived that the things which were said respecting the Sun-God as the Demiurgos, or Creator of the Universe, and concerning Osiris and Isis, and all the Sacred Legends, may be interpreted as relating to the stars, their phases, occultations, and revolutions in their orbits, or else to the increase and decrease of the Moon, the course of the Sun, the vault of the sky as seen by night or by day, or the river Nile, and, in short, they explain everything as relating to natural objects, and nothing as having reference to incorporeal and living essences.

In the *Chaldean Oracles*, it also reveals a universe that seems to mirror a Gnostic and Hermetic one. Christopher Plaisance writes in *Of Cosmocrators and Cosmic Gods: The Place of the Archons in De Mysteriis*:

In typical Middle Platonic fashion, Hermetic theology presents an emanative hierarchy of God, a demiurge, and seven planetary powers—who, similar to the Gnostics, were generally described as ruling powers, διοικηταί (“governors, or administrators”) and ἄρχοντες, rather than gods. The Sun was identified with the demiurge, and the surrounding cosmic bodies were instruments with which he crafted the world. The planetary governors were depicted as administering mankind’s fate, and shaping man in their nature—as a microcosm—an act which is explicitly described as being done out of love. Other texts in the Hermetica describe the planetary beings as gods, but the identity between the seven rulers of the early chapters and the planets is clear.

...

The world of the Oracles was a series of concentric circles, composed of the intelligible empyrean, the ethereal realm of the fixed stars and planets, and the material sphere which contained the sublunar region and the Earth. This triadic structure was organised by three gods: the Monad, Demiurge, and Hekate. It was further administrated by three tiers of intermediary beings: the iynges (ἰνγες), synoches (συνοχεῖς), and teletarchs (τελετάρχαι), the latter of whose origins are identical with the planetary archons and cosmocrators described previously. However, the teletarchs were not exclusively relegated to planetary roles; the material teletarchs, for instance, were associated with the moon and were thought to govern the sublunar realm. The Oracles further describe the world as populated by various species of terrestrial, atmospheric, and aquatic daimons. Regarding the teletarchs, Majercik notes that an important distinction must be made between the “Chaldean” and Gnostic systems in that the teletarchs are “benign, even helpful figures, who aid the ascent of the soul”, and that “the Chaldean system maintains a more positive, monistic view of creation”.

Indeed, it seems like Hekate seems to be a placeholder for Sophia from Ophite/Gnostic myth. **(We will return to Hekate later.)**





As fate would have it, a Syrian-Roman sun god, called **Elegabalus** (or Heliogabalus, which is often given the meaning of “Lord of the Mountain” from the Aramaic *Llaha Gabal*) was also worshiped in Syria as well as Phoenicia in the form of Baal and in El from the Canaanites. These gods were also generally considered to be “lords” of the earth and rulers of the universe who were bringers of fertility as well as death and warfare and often demanded child sacrifice at the fire altars of Molech. It is essentially the same god as the invincible sun, the patron god of the Sol Invictus cult. This is also essentially the same god of the cult of Mithra. Eventually, all of the sun-worshipping cults like Mithraism were absorbed into the Catholic Church. Elegabalus is the true god of Rome and his worship continues on to this day. That’s why **Jesus is often depicted with the sun**, and why the host in the center of a cross with a sun. Over at [Jesus888](#), the author writes:

The early Christian Church eagerly promoted Jesus-Helios-Sol sun symbolism to appease the Roman emperor Constantine who was the high priest of Sol Invictus all through his reign. The sun symbolism continues to the present day on robes, banners, icons, behind the cross in a ray of light, flames coming from the heart of Jesus, etc. Priests even bow and kiss a monstrance which is a gold statue of the sun on a pedestal during processions.

What is interesting about the meaning behind the name of Elegabalus is that it is the very same attribute given to the God of the Old Testament, Yahweh. In Genesis 22:14, we read:

Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

We also see Moses receive the Law from Yahweh in the form of a covenant between him and the nation of Israel on a mountain in Exodus 34. Earlier we see Yahweh descend his holy mountain Sinai in Exodus 19:18-22 in a very dramatic and manifest fashion:

Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. Then the LORD spoke to Moses, “Go down, warn the people, so that they do not break through to the LORD to gaze, and many

of them perish. “Also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, or else the LORD will break out against them.”

It is interesting to see how Yahweh tells Moses to warn the ancient Hebrews about not gazing directly onto him, lest that they perish. This sounds very similar to sun-gazers who look at the sun too long, who fall into danger of being blinded. In other words, Yahweh can be compared to the Roman Sol Invictus, or Heliogabalus. Amazingly, this is exactly what the Pauline author is saying 2 *Corinthians* 3! The angelic inspired laws of Yahweh is called the “ministry of death” as opposed to the glorious, righteous, spiritual gospel of Jesus Christ that condemns it to death.

But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away,⁸ how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?⁹ For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.¹⁰ For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels.¹¹ For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.

¹² Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech—¹³ unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.¹⁴ But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.¹⁵ But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.¹⁶ Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

In Mark S. Smith’s [article on the worship of Yahweh](#), he writes how the ancient Israelites were likely polytheists, and that monotheistic devotion to Yahweh likely developed in later Judaism, Yahweh originally having been only one of many gods in the original Israelite pantheon. Could Yahweh not really have been the true creator God, as the Gnostics thought, but he wanted all the power and glory for himself, so he defied the original council of gods and whitewashed Judaism of all traces of other gods so that he alone would be worshiped? “I, the Lord, am a jealous god.” This would explain why all the other deities hate him and the Jews. It’s obvious from the first creation story that the Elohim was originally a pantheon of deities, not a singular entity, since Elohim is plural. Yahweh, then, would be some sort of rogue deity who wanted to usurp the divine hierarchy and steal the throne for himself, which would, ironically, equate him with Lucifer/Satan. This is exactly how the Gnostics saw it. Anyway...



In *The Gnostics and Their Remains*, by Charles William King, he writes how the name and utterance IAO, is the Hellenized form of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton.

Diodorus Siculus, when enumerating the different legislators of antiquity, says, "Amongst the Jews Moses pretended that the god surnamed Iao gave him his laws" (i. 94). And this is elucidated by the remark of Clemens Alexandrinus, that the Hebrew Tetragrammaton, or Mystic Name, is pronounced IAOU, and signifies "He that is and shall be." Theodoret states that the same four letters were pronounced by the Samaritans as IABE (Jave); by the Jews as IAΩ. Jerome (upon Psalm viii. says, "The Name of the Lord" amongst the Hebrews is of four letters, Iod, He, Vau, He, which is properly the Name of God, and may be read as IAHO (Iaho) (that is in Latin characters), which is held by the Jews for unutterable.

IAO was also used by various Gnostic groups, including the Valentinians and the Ophites. Irenaeus reports that in *Against Heresies* (1:21) that the Gnostics invoked IAO in their rituals:

The name of restitution stands thus: Messia, Uphareg, Namempsoëman, Chaldœaur, Mosomedœa, Acphrance, Psaua, Jesus Nazaria. The interpretation of these words is as follows: I do not divide the Spirit of Christ, neither the heart nor the supercelestial power which is merciful; may I enjoy Your name, O Saviour of truth! Such are words of the initiators; but he who is initiated, replies, I am established, and I am redeemed; I redeem my soul from this age (world), and from all things connected with it in the name of Iao, who redeemed his own soul into redemption in Christ who lives. Then the bystanders add these words, Peace be to all on whom this name rests. After this they anoint the initiated person with balsam; for they assert that this ointment is a type of that sweet odour which is above all things.

Irenaeus also claimed that the Valentinians taught that the word IAO originated as an exclamation in the mouth of a power called "Horos" against the fallen Sophia in *Against Heresies* (1.4.1):

Having then obtained a form, along with intelligence, and being immediately deserted by that Logos who had been invisibly present with her— that is, by Christ — she strained herself to discover that light which had forsaken her, but could not effect her purpose, inasmuch as she was prevented by Horos. And as Horos thus obstructed her further progress, he exclaimed, Iao,

whence, they say, this name Iao derived its origin. And when she could not pass by Horos on account of that passion in which she had been involved, and because she alone had been left without, she then resigned herself to every sort of that manifold and varied state of passion to which she was subject...

IAO is also one of the seven head-demons or archons in Ophite and Sethian cosmology. In the *Apocryphon of John*, it lists Iao as the fourth power of the seven cosmocrators: "...the fourth is Yao, he has a serpent's face with seven heads..." And it is also a password and a name to command demons like how people may invoke Jesus Christ's sacred name, in prayer or an exorcism rite, both of which were considered to be magical acts. Dr. M D Magee writes in [Hellenistic Magic and Jesus—Jesus as Magician](#):

"In the name of Jesus" is a magical formula based on the magical power of names. Its use in Christian baptism is not merely symbolic of the power of God but is meant to confer magical power to the baptized person. It pervades the person with the power of the name that would drive out all rival powers, an example of the very name beliefs found in all parts of the ancient world when Christianity was being formed.

The seven vowels were considered magical and magical texts often have names consisting of strings of combinations of vowels. Yehouah is a string of vowels.

We also see Jesus Christ himself invoke IAO in the *Pistis Sophia* (V. 142) and the *Second Book of Jeu* (45, 46, and 47) in a prayer ritual asking his heavenly father to forgive and blot out the sins of his disciples so that they may be worthy of the Kingdom of God and the "Treasury of Light." Celsus in the *True Doctrine* as quoted and refuted by Origen in *Contra Celsus* states that this Iao is also an archon:

They next imagine that he who has passed through Ialdabaoth and arrived at Iao ought thus to speak: "Thou, O second Iao, who shinest by night, who art the ruler of the secret mysteries of son and father, first prince of death, and portion of the innocent, bearing now mine own beard as symbol, I am ready to pass through thy realm, having strengthened him who is born of thee by the living word. Grace be with me; father, let it be with me."

Although Celsus does take plenty of pot-shots against the Christians (whom he equates with the Ophites without a second thought) as well as the Jews who "worship angels, and are addicted to sorcery, in which Moses was their instructor," he surprisingly has great admiration for YHWH and condemns the Ophites for their blasphemy and cursing against him.

The ruler of those named 'archontics' is termed the 'accursed' god. Who would venture to use such language—as if there could be an "accursed" divinity! Yet the God of the Mosaic cosmogony is termed an accursed divinity, because such is his character, and worthy of execration in the opinion of those who so regard him, inasmuch as he pronounced a curse upon the serpent, who introduced the first human beings to the knowledge of good and evil.

What could be more foolish or insane than such senseless wisdom? For what blunder has the Jewish lawgiver committed? and why do you accept, by means, as you say, of a certain allegorical and typical method of interpretation, the cosmogony which he gives, and the law of the Jews, while it is with unwillingness, O most impious man, that you give praise to the Creator of the world, who promised to give them all things; who promised to multiply their race to the ends of the earth, and to raise them up from the dead with the same flesh and blood, and who gave inspiration to their prophets; and, again, you slander him! When you feel the force of such considerations, indeed, you acknowledge that you worship the same God; but when your teacher Jesus and the Jewish Moses give contradictory decisions, you seek another God, instead of him, and the Father!

Returning to Charles William King's research on IAO, he writes how the Neoplatonists and various pagan mystery religions go to great lengths to **lie** about their sacred mysteries:

Macrobius (Sat. i. 18), whilst labouring to prove that the Sun-worship was in truth the sole religion of Paganism, under whatever name it was disguised, gives a notice very much to our purpose. The Apollo of Claros, when consulted as to the true nature of the god called 'Iaòs, gave the following response:—

*“The sacred things ye learn, to none disclose,
A little falsehood much discretion shows;
Regard Iaos as supreme above,
In winter Pluto, in spring's opening Jove,
Phœbus through blazing summer rules the day,
Whilst autumn owns the mild Iaos sway.” Here we find Iao expressly recognised as the title of the Supreme God whose physical representative is the Sun. Again we have Dionysos or Bacchus added to the list by Orpheus, who sings*

“Jove, Pluto, Phœbus, Bacchus, all are One.”

In other words, those who worship the sun, also worship Iao, and also worship the Demiurge, the true object of adoration in their mysteries. Many of the pagan mystery cults directed worship and sacrifice to this god. **No Gnostic would ever be caught dead worshipping the sun because solar worship is ultimately worshipping the representation of the Demiurge.** As we've seen many claimed that the sun is the son of god and that the sun to us is God in physical form. But isn't this type of star/planet-worship the very thing that Paul and the Gnostics said was the great deception?

“How is it that you worship the elements of the world? You observe days, months, seasons, and years! I am afraid that I have labored for you in vain.” (Galatians 4).

Indeed, this is what the the ancients did by conflating Dionysus as merely one face of the solar Demiurge.

That Iaos was recognised by the Greeks as an epithet for the Sun in the autumnal quarter has been shown from Macrobius. The philosophical interpreters of the ancient mythology discovered in Dionysos also a mere type of the same luminary. “One is Zeus, Hades, Helios, and Dionysos.”

The *Hymns to Orpheus* also include one specific hymn to Helios as well. The *Mithras Liturgy* sings many praises to Helios and specifically asks the initiate to alter their consciousness so that they may rise with Helios in solar rapture resembling the mysticism of meditative practices designed to **create a vehicle/body of “light,”** we see in Tantra and the Kabbalah, a tradition that made its way into 19th Century Western occultism in a diluted form, specifically in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

I, _____ whose mother is _____ according to the immutable decree of god, EYE YIA EEI AO EIAY IYA IEO! Since it is impossible for me, born (530) mortal, to rise with the golden brightnesses of the immortal brilliance, OEY AEO EYA EOE YAE 5IAE, stand, O perishable nature of mortals, and at once me safe and sound after the inexorable and pressing (535) need. For I am the son PSYCHO[N] DEMOY PROCHO PROA, I am MACHARPH[.]IN MOY PROPSYCHON PROE!”

Draw in breath from the rays, drawing up three times as much as you can, and you will see yourself being lifted up and (540) ascending to the height, so that you seem to be in mid-air. You will hear nothing either of man or of any other living thing, nor in that hour will you see

anything of mortal affairs on earth, but rather you will see all immortal things. For in that day (545) and hour you will see the divine order of the skies: the presiding gods⁸ rising into heaven, and others setting.

...

“Hail, O Lord, Great Power, Great Might, (640) King, Greatest of gods, Helios, the Lord of heaven and earth, God of gods: mighty is your breath; mighty is your strength, O Lord. If it be your will, announce me to the supreme god, the one who has begotten and made you...”

The late Acharya S/D.M. Murdock confirms all this in her book *Did Moses Exist?* when she points out that the god of the Hebrews may be the same as Bacchus and Iao:

As noted, “Sabaoth” may be related to “Sabeus,” which in turn is an epithet of Dionysus, who is also equated with Iao by Marcobius. Thus, Yahweh is Iao is Bacchus, and all are the sun.



When it comes to Hecate/Hekate, she too exhibits solar characteristics, in the form of the cthonic, black sun as the Queen of the underworld and hell. She also corresponds with the symbols of the moon, the World Soul and the waters of the abyss. Here is what Eusebius has to say about her in *Praeparatio Evangelica*:

“The symbols of Hecate are wax of three colours, white and black and red combined, having a figure of Hecate bearing a scourge, and torch, and sword, with a serpent to be coiled round her; and the symbols of Uranus are the mariners’ stars nailed up before the doors. For these symbols the gods themselves have indicated in the following verses. The speaker is Pan:

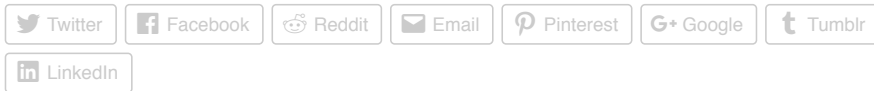
“Evil spirits drive afar:

*Then upon the fire set wax
 Gleaming fair with colours three,
 White and black must mingle there
 With the glowing embers' red,
 Terror to the dogs of hell.
 Then let Hecate's dread form
 Hold in her hand a blazing torch,
 And the avenging sword of fate;
 While closely round the goddess wrapp'd
 A snake fast holds her in his coils,
 And wreathes about her awful brow.
 Let the shining key be there,
 And the far-resounding scourge,
 Symbol of the daemons' power.”*

In the *Chaldean Oracles*, it sets out a long, drawn out cosmology that begins with the Paternal Monad called the “Mind of the Eternal Father, that splits off into a duad, and eventually into a triad, similar to the idea of the Trinity. The triad projects the “first Course” as being sacred and even calls it “the Matrix containing all things. Thence abundantly springs forth the Generation of multivarious Matter. Thence extracted a prester the flower of glowing fire.” Hecate is also considered a projection of the Father and is called the “the Operatrix, because she is the Dispensatrix of Life-giving fire. Because also it fills the Life producing bosome of Hecate.” John Turner in *The Setting of the Platonizing Treatises* writes about Hecate’s role in the *Chaldean Oracles* and how it is very similar to that of Barbelo, the Sethian version of Sophia.

The Oracles feature a feminine principle of life named Hecate, said to be a sort of diaphragm or membrane, the “center between the two Fathers” (frg. 50 Majercik), which separates the “first and second fires” (frg. 6), i.e., the Father and the immediately subjacent paternal Intellect.³⁹ Hecate has a dual position: On the one hand, she is the source of variegated matter, generated by the Father as the womb that receives his lightening (the ideas), “the girdling bloom of fire and the powerful breath beyond the fiery poles” (frg. 35). On the other hand, she is the life-producing fount (frgs. 30 and 32; cf. frgs. 96, 136 [zwvsh/ dunavmeil]) from whose right side flows the World Soul (frg. 51), while her left side retains the source of virtue. Upon her back, the emblem of the moon (her traditional symbol) represents boundless Nature, and her serpentine hair represents the Father’s winding noetic fire (frgs. 50–55). In her alternate designation as Rhea, she is said to be the source of the intellectuals (novera), whose generation she has received in her ineffable womb and upon whom she pours forth the vivifying fire (frgs. 32, 56); as zw/ogovno” qeav, she is the source of life, a veritable mother of the all. Hecate is also conceived as the Womb within which all things are sown and contained, much like Plato’s Receptacle,⁴⁰ and therefore seems to play a role similar to that of Plotinus’s intelligible matter or trace of unbounded Life emitted from One to become bounded Intellect, not to mention the Sethian Mother Barbelo, the “Womb of the All” (Ap. John II 5,5; Trim. Prot. XIII 38,15; 45,6) who pours forth “Living Water.”

So could it be that Hecate is merely a stand-in for Sophia or Barbelo? It sure seems that way. It also seems as though the authors of the *Chaldean Oracles* was deliberately rewriting the Gnostic cosmological myth for another audience in competition against the earlier Gnostic sects. Hecate is also a patron goddess that **practitioners of the Greek Magical Papryi pay homage to as well**. Chaldean theurgy greatly inspired Iamblichus in many ways, so in a way, he himself indirectly draws inspiration from the much earlier Gnostics, despite his not so apparent solar worship of the pagan mystery cults, including that of Jews. *Ezekiel* 8, however, seems to condemn secret sun worship but that is another story altogether. When one falls deep enough into the theurgical rabbit hole, who knows what interesting bread-trail of gnosis one may find and follow.

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January 17, 2016 at 12:54 pm

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**Melissa Sanchez**

September 7, 2016 at 3:46 pm

still didn't answer my question...

Zoroaster believed that _____ represented the good in the world and _____ was the evil counterpart.

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[REPLY](#)**Melissa Sanchez**

September 7, 2016 at 3:47 pm

never mind xD

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