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G.R.S. Mead

Excerpt

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## [THE FIRST BOOK OF PISTIS SOPHIA.]

(1) It came to pass, when Jesus had risen from the dead, that he passed eleven years speaking with his disciples, and instructing them up to the regions of the first statutes only, and up to the regions of the first mystery, the mystery within the veil, within the first statute, which is the four and twentieth mystery, and below those which are in the second space of the first mystery, which is before all mysteries—the father in the likeness of a dove.

Jesus  
hitherto  
instructeth  
his dis-  
ciples only  
up to the  
region of  
the first  
mystery.

And Jesus said to his disciples: “I am come from that first mystery, which is also the last mystery, the four and twentieth mystery.” For his disciples knew not that mystery, nor did they understand that there was anything within that mystery; but they thought that that mystery indeed was the chief of the pleroma, and the head of all that exists; and they thought it was the end of all ends, for Jesus had said to them concerning

What the  
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tery sur-  
roundeth.

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that mystery : “ It surroundeth the first statute, (2) and the five impressions, and the great light, and the five supporters, and even the whole treasure of light.”

Moreover, Jesus had not told his disciples the whole distribution of all the regions of The regions of the great invisible. the great invisible, and of the three triple powers, and of the four and twenty invisibles, with all their regions, their æons, and their orders, according to the manner of their distribution, for they are the emanations of the great invisible ; nor of their ungenerated, self-generated, and generated, their light-givers and unpaired, their rulers and authorities, their lords and archangels, their angels and decans, their workmen and all the habitations of their spheres, and all the orders of each one of them.

Nor had Jesus told his disciples the whole distribution of the emanations of the The treasure of light. treasure, nor their orders, according to which they are distributed ; nor had he told them their saviours, according to the orders of each as they are ; nor had he told them what are the guardians which are beside each [gate] of the treasure of light ; nor had he told them the region of the saviour of the twins, (3) who is the child of the child ; nor had he told them the regions of the three amens, in what regions they are distributed ; nor had he told them in

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what region are the five trees, or the seven amens, which are also the seven voices, what is their region, according to the manner of their distribution.

Nor had Jesus told his disciples of what type are the five supporters, or from what region they were brought forth; nor had he told them how the great light had emanated, or from what region it had been brought forth; nor had he told them of the five impressions, nor of the first statute, from what region they had been brought forth; but he simply spoke of them, and taught them that they existed, without speaking of their emanation and the order of their regions. And this is why they did not know that there were other regions within that mystery.

Nor had he told his disciples: "I pass through such or such a region until I enter that mystery, or [when] I leave it"; but, in instructing them, he merely said: "I have come from that mystery." And this is why they thought concerning that mystery, that it was the end of ends, (4) and that it was the chief of the pleroma, and even that it was the pleroma itself. For Jesus said to his disciples: "It is that mystery which surroundeth all the pleromas of which I have spoken, from the day on which I first met with you even unto this day." And this is, there-

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fore, why the disciples thought there was nothing within that mystery.

It came to pass, therefore, that the disciples were sitting together on the Mount of Olives, speaking of these things, rejoicing with great joy, and being exceedingly glad and saying one to another :  
Jesus and his disciples are seated on the Mount of Olives. “Blessed are we before all men who are on the earth, for the saviour hath revealed this unto us, and we have received all fulness and all perfection.” And while they were saying these things the one to the other, Jesus sat a little removed from them.

It came to pass, therefore, on the fifteenth day of the month of Tobe, the day of the full moon, on that day, when the sun had risen in its going, that there came forth after it a great stream of light shining exceedingly ; there was no measure to the light with which it was surrounded, for it came forth from the light of lights, and it came forth from the last mystery, (5) that is to say, the four and twentieth mystery, from the interiors to the exteriors which are in the orders of the second space of the first mystery. And this stream of light poured over Jesus, and surrounded him entirely. He was seated apart from his disciples, and was shining exceedingly ; there was no measure to the light in which he was.

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But the disciples saw not Jesus because of the great light in which he was, or which proceeded from him; for their eyes were blinded by the great light in which he was. They saw the light only, shooting forth great rays of light. And the rays of light were not equal together, but the light was of every kind, and of every type, from the lower to the higher part thereof; each [ray] more admirable than its fellow, in infinite manner, in a great glory of immeasurable light, which stretched from the earth to the heavens. And when the disciples saw the light, they were in great fear and great confusion.

(6) It came to pass, therefore, when this stream of light had come upon Jesus, and had gradually surrounded him, that Jesus was borne upward or soared aloft, shining exceedingly in an immeasurable light. And the disciples gazed after him, none of them speaking, until he had entered into the heaven. They were all in great silence. These things then came to pass on the fifteenth day of the moon, the day on which it is full in the month of Tobe.

It came to pass, when Jesus had ascended into heaven, after the third hour, that all the powers of the heavens were confused, and all were thrown one on another in turn, they and all

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their æons, all their regions, and all their orders,  
The confusion of the powers and the great earthquake. and the whole earth was shaken, and all the inhabitants thereof. And confusion was upon all men in the world, and also upon the disciples, and all thought that the world would surely be destroyed.

And all the powers which are in the heavens did not cease to be in confusion, they and the whole world, and all were shaken the one on the other in turn, from the third hour of the fifteenth day of the moon of Tobe, until the ninth hour of the morrow.

And all the angels with their archangels, and The dismay of the disciples. all the powers of the height, (7) all sang from the interior of the interiors, so that the whole world heard their voice; they ceased not till the ninth hour of the morrow. But the disciples sat together in fear, and were in the greatest possible distress. They feared because of the great earthquake which was taking place, and they wept together, saying: "What will be? Surely the saviour will not destroy all the regions?" Thus saying, they wept together.

On the ninth hour of the morrow, the heavens Jesus descended again. were opened, and they saw Jesus descending, shining exceedingly; there was no measure to the light which surrounded

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## FIRST BOOK.

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him, for he shone more brightly than when he had ascended to the heavens, so that it is impossible for any in this world to describe the light in which he was. He shot forth rays shining exceedingly; his rays were without measure, nor were his rays of light equal together, but they were of every figure and of every type, some being more admirable than the others in infinite manner. And they were all pure light in every part at the same time. It was of three degrees, The nature of his glory. one surpassing the other in infinite manner. The second, which was in the midst, excelled the first which was below it, and the third, the most admirable of all, surpassed the two below *it*. The first glory was placed below all, like to the light which came upon Jesus (8) before he ascended into the heavens, and was very regular as to its own light. And the three degrees of light were of every variety of light and type, each excelling the others in infinite manner.

It came to pass, when the disciples had seen these things, that they feared exceedingly, and were troubled. But Jesus, Jesus addresseth them. the compassionate and merciful-minded, when he saw that his disciples were troubled with great confusion, spake unto them, saying: "Take courage. It is I, be not afraid."

It came to pass, when the disciples heard

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these words, that they said : “ Master, if it be thou, withdraw thy glorious light that we may be able to stand, so that our eyes be not blinded. We have been dismayed, and the whole world hath been dismayed, by the greatness of the light which is in thee.”

Then Jesus drew to himself the glory of his light ; and when this was done, all the disciples took courage and came to Jesus, and cast themselves together at his feet and worshipped him, rejoicing with great joy. They said unto him : “ Master, whither didst thou go ? or on what ministry wentest thou ? or wherefore are all these confusions and shakings which have taken place ? ”

Then Jesus, the compassionate, said unto them : “ Rejoice and be glad from this hour, for I have gone to the regions whence I came forth. (9) From this day forth, therefore, will I speak with you freely, from the beginning of the truth unto the completion thereof ; and I will speak to you face to face without parable. From this hour will I hide nothing from you of the things which pertain to the height, and of those of the region of truth ; for authority hath been given me by the ineffable and by the first mystery of all mysteries to speak to you, from the beginning to the end, from the interiors to the exteriors,

He draweth  
his light  
unto him-  
self.

He pro-  
miseth to  
tell them  
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## FIRST BOOK.

9

and from the exteriors to the interiors. Hearken, therefore, that I may tell you all things.

“It came to pass, as I was sitting a little removed from you on the Mount of Olives, meditating on the duties of the ministry for which I was sent, which they said was completed, and [how] the last mystery had not yet sent me my vesture—it is the four and twentieth mystery from the interiors to the exteriors, of those which are in the second space of the first mystery, in the orders of that space—it came to pass, therefore, when I understood that the duty of the ministry for which I had come was fulfilled, and that that mystery had not yet sent me my vesture, which I had placed in it, until its time should be fulfilled—I was meditating on this on the Mount of Olives, a little removed from you—it came to pass, when the sun rose in the place of its rising, that then through the first mystery, which was from the beginning, on account of which the universe hath been created, (10) from which also now I am come, now and not formerly before they had crucified me; it came to pass, by order of that mystery, that this vesture of light was sent me, which he had given me from the beginning, and which I had placed in the last mystery, which is the four and

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twentieth mystery, from the interior of those which are in the orders of the second space of the first mystery. This is the vesture, then, which I had left in the last mystery, until the time should be fulfilled when I should take it again, and should begin to speak to the human race, and reveal to them all things from the beginning of the truth to its completion, and speak to them from the interiors of the interiors to the exteriors of the exteriors, and from the exteriors of the exteriors to the interiors of the interiors. Rejoice, therefore, and be glad and rejoice more than greatly, for it is to you that it hath been given, that I first speak from the beginning of the truth to its completion.

“For this cause have I chosen you from the beginning through the first mystery. Rejoice, therefore, and be glad, in that when I came into the world, (11) from the beginning, I brought with me twelve powers, as I told you from the beginning. I took them from the hands of the twelve saviours of the treasure of light, according to the command of the first mystery. These powers, therefore, I cast into the wombs of your mothers, when I came into the world, and they are those which are in your bodies this day. For these powers have been given unto you before the whole world, for it is ye who are to

Of the souls  
of the disci-  
ples and  
their incar-  
nation.