

THE SCHEME OF VALENTINUS

Christian Gnosticism in the Second Century

1. God is a single, transcendent, and utterly unknowable being originating in the primal cause – the Supreme Good.
2. Depth emanated Silence. Representing male and female principles, Depth and Silence emanated Understanding and Truth.
3. From Understanding and Truth came two pairs, Word and Life, and Man and The Elect.
4. Eventually 30 divine beings (Aeons) are produced, pair by pair, male and female, each representing Christian concepts and virtues. All of these Aeons complete the heavenly world (Pleroma).
5. Each Aeon is weaker than the one that emanated it. The last Aeon was Sophia (Wisdom).
6. Wisdom, desiring to know the Unknowable Father, fell into darkness of despair. In her distress – and without a male partner – gave birth to a premature and malformed infant, Achamoth (Child of Chaos).
7. Because of his unnatural birth, this child of chaos was expelled from the Pleroma. And once outside the Pleroma it created matter.
8. Wisdom also produced another offspring, Demiurge (Workman) who gave shape and form to this matter.
9. When Wisdom saw what had happened, and what she had done to cause this, she grieved even more. All the other Aeons in the Pleroma grieved with her as well and they called upon the two Aeons Understanding and Truth to help her. They, then produced two other Aeons named Christ and Holy Spirit to rescue Wisdom from her sorrow.
10. Christ united himself to the man Jesus in order to teach mankind the saving knowledge (gnosis) about their origin and destiny.
11. Those who receive this knowledge are the Chosen; at their deaths they will be freed from the evil matter which includes their bodies. They will return to the Pleroma, from which they received their spiritual existence.
12. In the end, all material things will be finally surrendered to disorder and destruction.

- The Demiurge (Workman) is the creator of not just the universe, but also of men's souls. Since he is related to Wisdom, she controls him from the Pleroma, although he is unaware of this.
- Through Wisdom's influence, the Workman creates people in whom there are divine sparks or bits of deity (good spiritual elements, remnants of the pleroma). These are the people who receive this secret knowledge and are saved.