



GNOSTICISM



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## Gnosticism

- \* Ultimate transcendent God
- \* Salvation by *gnosis*, knowledge
- \* Cosmic dualism: light/darkness, matter/spirit
- \* Docetic or adoptionist christologies
- \* Complicated ontologies of Æons, Ogdoads, etc.
- \* Redeemer myth in which divine messenger comes to awaken individual humans to their innate divinity
- \* Ambivalent about women/femininity

Now since it has been said that you are my twin and true companion, examine yourself that you may understand who you are, in what way you exist, and how you came to be.

*Book of Thomas the Contender*

[Wisdom], having engaged in an impossible and impracticable attempt, brought forth an amorphous substance, such as her female nature enabled her to produce. When she looked upon it, her first feeling was one of grief, on account of the imperfection of its generation, and then of fear lest this should end her own existence.

Valentinus, according to *Irenæus* 1.2,3

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