

~Other Speakers S-Z: Robert Wurtz II:

Gnostic Dualism

Dualism means twofold. It has several applications, however I wish to deal with the Gnostic philosophy that promotes the concept that all reality boils down to two equal and opposite opposing forces. Many believe that the bible teaches a great struggle between equal and opposite forces of good and evil. This is not the case, it is a Gnostic concept. In pagan Greece *demiourgos* is a word or name that became the technical term for the maker of heaven and earth. In this way it is used by Plato in his writings. Although often employed by the Fathers and others to indicate the Creator, the word never strictly meant "one who produces out of nothing" (for this the Greeks used *ktistes*), but only "one who fashions, shapes, and models". Using the word in this way causes great problems for Jews who know that God created the heavens and the earth from NOTHING. A creator in genuine Christian theology has no place in heathen philosophy, which unlike Christianity always presupposes the existence of matter. Demiurge soon became a common term in Christian Gnosticism. Gnostics saw the Old Testament God as a mean and bad God. For Gnostics, the Demiurge became the personification of the power of evil, the "Satan of Gnosticism", with whom the elect were to battle to the end that they might be pleasing to the Good God of the New Testament. This is a sorely pagan concept that made an influence on early Church Fathers and certain of their concepts and doctrines.

It would not be long until Marcion would totally discard the Old Testament and was later condemned as a heretic. He ignored the fact that the Old Testament was "THE" Bible of the early Church (pre 70 CE) and that converts were won to Christ using the Old Testament in light of the sufferings and teachings of Christ. The Ethiopian Eunuch, for example, was won to Christ by the book of Isaiah. Who among us today could evangelize from the Old Testament? Paul told Timothy that from a child he had known the holy scriptures that were able to make him wise, etc.

The character of the Gnostic Demiurge became still more complicated when in some systems he was identified with Yahweh, the God of the Jews or of the Old Testament, and was brought in opposition to Christ of the New Testament, whom they called- the Only Begotten Son of the "Supreme and Good God." To the Gnostics the purpose of Christ's coming as Saviour and Redeemer was to rescue us from the power of the Demiurge and the EVIL OF ALL MATTER; the lord of the world of this darkness, and bring us to the light of the Good God, His Father in heaven. Therefore all that the "Demiurge" created was evil and this included all matter. It is of little doubt that these concepts were mixed with Paul's teachings about the "flesh" (because it is matter) and used to promote a dualistic and Gnostic concept of spirituality. This is why people used to scourge their flesh because they believed it was evil.

The struggle in scripture is not against an evil that is equal and opposite to good, for to believe this is to believe that Satan is the equal and opposite of God. Satan is a fallen Cherub which led 1/3 of the stars (angels) in the rebellion. By no means are they equal and opposite to God in like fashion to the good and evil described in mythology or even modern shows such as Star Wars. This is heresy. It is rooted in an ancient false belief that a "Demiurge" created all things material and that the good God created all things of the spirit. This naturally leads to the Gnostic belief that one needs to get out of the "flesh" and into the "spirit." On the surface this sounds almost biblical in that we are to die to the flesh and walk in the Spirit; but what is important is understanding what scripture is saying compared to what dualism teaches. We will look more at this in our next study.

Notes**

For further info on Demiurge see:

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04707b.htm>

Gnosticism has made a comeback in certain Charismatic circles by the introduction of mystical New Age concepts of trying to get out of the "flesh" and into the "spirit." This is not the same as walking in the Spirit according to scripture. Prayer in these circles are more akin to TM than biblical prayer.