

THE GOSPEL OF PHILIP

Found at Nag Hammadi in Egypt, the Gospel of Philip, tells us that Jesus was an apparition and rose from the dead before he died. Jesus lived way back in the Stone Age. Philip says things that have since his time found to have been correct – for example, that Jesus never lived in the first century so he has to be taken seriously.

The research material for this work was just thrown together. It shows the marks of the Gnostic system of Valentinus. This means the author had access to the outstanding scholarship of the Valentinians and should be taken seriously.

Because the book is like the format of the catechisms of the second century to the fourth it is dated in the late second century (The Nag Hammadi Library in English, page 141). But the way it is disorganised hints that most of the material in it must go back a lot further. The quotations from the gospels are hurried insertions – whoever put them in had no intention of tampering much. If the gospel in its original form had been all late second century we would expect to see criticisms of the Christian writings in it for it opposes anything that makes people fail to see that the spiritual Jesus saves and there is no physical Jesus. So in its original form and because of its primitive teaching it goes back to the first century or the early part of the second before the gospels appeared. It is sacramentalist and it would use the gospel of John which has been traditionally been thought to have been a major source of sacramental thinking more if it does not. It quotes John once and calls it the word of God. Yet it contradicts it! The author could only get pieces of John's gospel for he couldn't get his piece of it right so he wrote before John was made public in the middle of the second century. Despite himself he was proving that John was a liar. This perhaps accidental attack on John's veracity carries more weight than all the early testaments favouring the apostolic doctrine put together. The Church will say it was just a mistake. But you have to take historical material as it is for if you start assuming that anything you don't like is a mistake you are on the path to danger. A historical portrait has to stand by what the written sources say for there is no alternative but worthless speculation.

The book is not merely a collection of Gnostic myth that the author believed you could dissent from. The sacramentalism and the emphasis on knowing magical names of Jesus and the catechism format suggest that it was a dogmatic book for a sect. What was in it was in it because it was believed to be as much fact as the rising of the sun every morning.

The quote from John says that whoever does not eat the flesh and drink the blood has no life in him. But the flesh is interpreted as the word of God and the blood as the holy spirit of God. This would be a denial that the gospel version of Jesus existed as a flesh and blood being so he could have been a vision or an illusion or a symbol from Heaven.

It says that Jesus Christ lived before men knew how to make bread, "Before Christ came there was no bread in the world, just as Paradise, the place where Adam was, had many trees to nourish the animals but no wheat to sustain man. Man used to feed like the animals, but then Christ came, the perfect man, he brought bread from heaven in order that might be nourished with the food of man". This bread could be literal bread so it is literal bread. The first century Jesus of the gospels is denied.

Philip says that Mary did not conceive by the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is female. It says that the apostles hated her which shows that its author did not have the New Testament which says that Mary was chummy with the early Church.

The gospel says that Jesus appeared differently to different people suggesting that he was an apparition perhaps one that people induced to appear themselves by hypnotic rites.

It says Christ came to the whole place meaning he had been all over the world. The gospel comes to the brink of stating that Jesus was just a vision. It went on to say that Jesus burdened nobody while on earth which contradicts the gospels that he depended on charity to live and expected the apostles to die for him instead of sending them to safe places to preach. And that then he forbade causing distress to anybody though Jesus abused the Pharisees and caused a lot of misery. The author is disputing the gospel account. And yet he appeals to some word of God or scripture that supports his teaching meaning there was a book that would not be compatible with the gospels.

The gospel is reckoned by Barbara Thiering and her ilk to state that Jesus and Mary Magdalene had a romantic relationship. It says that he loved her more than the disciples and kissed her often on the mouth to their disgust. They complained and he said that he loved them like her. So if he loved her most and did not love her the most then love must be in two different senses. The first sense is sexual and the second is platonic.

The gospel says that kissing is a sacrament that gives wisdom, "We also kiss one another. We receive conception from the grace which is in one another". Kissing is causing you to be conceived as a child of God and passes on grace. So is there no

romance in Jesus and Mary's kisses? There must be some for he kissed her a lot and could have got others who could give the sacrament to do it. The early Christians kissed one another according to the New Testament. This was stopped to scotch unkind rumours. So the sacrament of the kiss points to the earliness of the gospel.

How does this slot in with the idea that Jesus didn't live in the first century for the gospels say Magdalene did live then? Gnostics had no problem making up stories about religious figures. They thought making myths and inventing faiths was a sign of gnosis and that all schools of mysticism strove for the one truth so the details didn't matter.

The author thought that Adam was nailed to the cross and that Adam and Jesus were one and the same. "When Eve was still in Adam death did not exist. When she was separated from him death came into being. If he enters again and attains his former self, death will be no more. "My God, My God, why O lord, have you forsaken me?" (Mk 15:34 and parallels). It was on the cross that he said these words, for he had departed from that place". The place was probably the Garden of Eden for Adam was expelled from it by God. Philip calls Jesus the perfect man so grammatically and otherwise he must have meant Adam. He wrote before the gospels became public for they contradict the context he puts the quote in. Jesus was a vision after his death which took place in prehistoric times.

The gospel says that there is the son of man which was Jesus' title and then there was the son of the son of man who is he who creates through the son of man and who can beget. The son of the son is every man so the son of man is Adam. Jesus and Adam were the same person or Adam was the first person to be possessed by the Christ Jesus force which became a part of him so that when he died you could say it died too.

Philip said that Adam came from two virgins which were the spirit and the earth and that therefore Jesus was born of a virgin to put the fall right. Adam's mothers were not women so Jesus' wasn't either. Adam was Jesus and Adam became Jesus by some kind of spiritual rebirth. Jesus' mother was the spirit. Gnostics saw creation as a fall from God so it is not the fall of Genesis where Adam and Eve were disinherited for disobedience that is meant. Adam was bad for he was earth and spirit and Jesus was good for he was pure spirit. Adam became Jesus when he got rid of what his mother earth had put into him. The therefore shows that Jesus was Adam for he fixed the fall that Adam had. Nobody else was involved. Nobody would argue that a person called Adam was virgin born so another person Jesus had to be for that makes no sense. That is not what the gospel is saying.

The gospel says that Adam became an animal by eating the fruit and that Christ was redeemed himself (page 152) and became sinless.

A story is attributed to the apostle Philip that Joseph the father of Jesus planted a garden of trees and made the cross of Jesus from them. But the gospel interprets this as an allegory for it starts about the tree of life in the middle of the garden and that it is from an olive tree there that we get the chrism and the chrism grants us a resurrection from spiritual death to life in this world. Joseph means increase in Hebrew and could be a symbol for the power that made Jesus or Adam. The cross could be the tree of life in the Garden of Eden that Adam was symbolically nailed to meaning he could not avail of its fruit and wanted to. The olives represent the salvation he won for us. This interpretation requires that Jesus be Adam and in the Garden of Eden. Adam could be the fallen animal man and Jesus the redeemed spiritual man. Though the two are different persons in many ways they are the same person in essence which is why they can be spoken of as if they were separate persons at times. If Joseph made Jesus' cross and Jesus was crucified in Joseph's garden then we could have a staged mock crucifixion. It was necessary to fake a resurrection which God used to give mystical knowledge to the world. The author of Philip might be denying the gospels that Joseph was dead during Jesus' ministry.

"Truth did not come into the world naked, but it came in types and images. The world will not receive truth in any other way." This completely repudiates and contradicts the gospels which are not wrapped up in symbols. So, Jesus must be a symbolic picture which does not rule out him being a true apparition that unveils truth to us. The gospel would not be teaching if Philip meant teaching. Jesus claimed to be the truth and this gospel is taking him literally.

The gospel condemned names because they cloak what is unreal. It said that words like Father, Son and Holy Spirit and resurrection blind one to the truth. It means you put your interpretation on them and they become idols. Words describe facts so the facts about the Son if you take him as somebody that lived on earth are as dangerous. Obviously, the gospel advocates truth so it forbids dependence on this alleged Jesus. He would not have come to earth to block our progress so he was not on earth at all and just speaks from Heaven to those who are in mystical communion with him - and though people differ in the details he gives them the truth that gives them personal transformation in the way that is best for them.

The gospel says that God dyes. But this is symbolism for the fact that God changes a person in water baptism which the text says.

The line, "God is a man-eater. For this reason men are [sacrificed] to him". The author may only be reiterating the Old Testament demand for killing people who commit certain sins.

We are told that Jesus came to crucify the world. So perhaps this is just another way of expressing what Jesus asked us to do when he told us to sacrifice ourselves and follow him by bearing our crosses.

It is argued that this gospel is worthless on the grounds that it is crazy. But you don't throw out the baby with the bath water. It is not really crazy.

Philip proves that Jesus was thought to have made up. It proves there were early Christians who denied that the gospels had the real Jesus and who treated gospels and legends about Jesus as allegories and myths not as literal truth which is the same as saying there is little or no evidence for the existence of Jesus.