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Is Basilides quoted in the *Philosophumena*?

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AS is well known, the theological interest of the question which is placed at the head of this article depends on the occurrence of undoubted quotations from the Fourth Gospel in the extracts which sketch the system of Basilides. The following passages occur: *καὶ τοῦτο, φησὶν, ἔστι τὸ λεγόμενον ἐν τοῖς εὐαγγελίοις· Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον.*¹ Again, *Ὅτι δέ, φησὶν, ἕκαστον ἰδίους ἔχει καιροῦς, ἰκανὸς ὁ σωτὴρ λέγων· Οὐπω ἦκει ἡ ὥρα μου, καὶ οἱ μάγοι τὸν ἀστέρα τεθεαμένοι.*² If these words were contained in a treatise written by Basilides, then the Fourth Gospel must not only be of earlier date than many critics in modern times have supposed, but it must also have been included in a recognized collection of gospels. The evidence which may be thus afforded has been summarily dismissed on the ground that Hippolytus³ mentions Basilides, and Isidore his son, and *πᾶς ὁ τούτων χορός*, and then cites them collectively through the whole of the following paragraph by the word *φησί*. We have, then, to inquire, first, whether Hippolytus is citing the opinion of the school collectively, that is to say, is presenting the general Basilidean theory in his own words, or is quoting some particular person; and if we decide that he is quoting, we must then inquire, in the second place, whether the person quoted is Basilides.

The parenthetical word *φησί* is usually a mark of quotation, and I believe it is for this purpose that it is employed by Hippolytus. I have examined with some care the lengthy article on the Naasseni⁴ with a view to ascertaining Hippolytus' usage in this matter. Here we have an abundant use of *φησί*, but no clue to either book or author. He professes simply to give the opinion of the school, which,

¹ VII. 22, p. 360. My references are to Duncker and Schneidewin's edition.

² VII. 27, p. 376.

³ I shall assume the correctness of the general opinion that Hippolytus is the author of the *Philosophumena*.

⁴ V. 6—11.

though having several divisions, is essentially one. Near the beginning⁵ he has the parenthetical *φασί*, which applies, however, to a very short general statement. A few lines farther on he has *φησί*. Throughout the exposition, statements in the plural, *φασί* (four or five times, generally with the indirect construction), *λέγουσι*, etc., are mixed up with passages containing the parenthetical *φησί*. No one, I think, can read these passages without being convinced that he has to do with quotations from some book containing an authoritative account of the views of these Gnostics. Whether he quotes from one or from several books we need not pause to consider, as there is nothing to indicate this except the style and tenor of the quotations. Any possible doubt as to whether the opinion of the school is cited in these places must, I think, be laid to rest by the appearance of the first person plural, *ὁ μόνους ἕξεστιν εἰδέναι τοῖς τελείοις, φησίν, ἡμῖν.*⁶ Again, *ἂ ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν μόνοι.*⁷ Farther on, *ἡμεῖς δέ, φησίν, ἐσμὲν οἱ τελῶναι.*⁸ Once more, *ἤλθομεν, φησίν, οἱ πνευματικοί.*⁹

What we here learn represents, so far as I have observed, Hippolytus' invariable usage. It is so even in the article where the theories of Valentinus, Heracleon, Ptolemy, *καὶ πᾶσα ἡ τοῦτων σχολή*, are dealt with.¹⁰ The opinions of Valentinus and his school are very generally given through the plural number, *λέγουσι, κατ' αὐτούς*, etc.; but several apparent quotations are introduced by *φησί*, and the natural supposition is that in these instances Hippolytus is reproducing the words of some particular man. After one of these, relating to a quotation from Moses, are the words, *καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο οὕτως γεγράφθαι θέλει.*¹¹ Elsewhere, having just alluded to the school as *ἐκείνοι*, with of course a plural verb, he has *ἐπιλέγει*, prefixed to what has all the appearance of being a quotation. The *θέλει* and *ἐπιλέγει* must refer to some one in particular.

The evidence is still more convincing in the article on Basilides. In the third and fourth lines of the very first quotation, where Basilides and his school are said to be cited collectively, are these words, *Ὅταν δὲ λέγω, φησί, τὸ ἦν, οὐχ ὅτι ἦν λέγω, ἀλλ' ἵνα σημάνω τοῦτο ὅπερ βούλομαι δεῖξαι, λέγω, φησίν, ὅτι ἦν ὅλως οὐδέν.*¹² Lower down on the same page we have, *καὶ οὐ δέχομαι, φησί, κ.τ.λ.* On the next page we have, *τὸ δὲ ἠθέλησε λέγω, φησί, κ.τ.λ.* On the next page, *ὁ, τι ἂν λέγω, φησίν.*¹³ This last passage is particularly

⁵ p. 132, l. 67.⁶ p. 152, l. 82.⁷ p. 158, l. 82.⁸ p. 160, l. 94.⁹ p. 164, l. 70. See also p. 172, l. 13; p. 174, l. 21, 25.¹⁰ VI. 29.¹² VII. 20, p. 356, l. 72, 73.¹¹ p. 280, l. 7.¹³ p. 360, l. 45.

remarkable, because it is actually introduced by *ἐκείνοι λέγουσιν*, showing, as it seems to me, conclusively, that the opinions of the school are described in the express words of *one* of their number. Yet again we have, *υἱὸν δέ, φησὶν, ἔσμεν ἡμεῖς οἱ πνευματικοί.*¹⁴ Whatever may be thought of the first person plural, can we rationally believe that these sentences with the first person singular merely "quote the opinion of the school"? It seems to me, therefore, to be fairly established that our *φησί* is, as we should expect, indicative of genuine quotation from a particular author.

If this, then, be admitted, we must endeavor to answer the question, who is it that is quoted? It may be one person throughout, or it may be now one, and now another. Are we, because this second alternative is possible, to dismiss the whole subject as incapable of affording any evidence? Surely not. To treat evidence as worthless because it is not demonstrative, is not the part of true criticism. It is precisely in these doubtful cases that critical judgment is required. We do not want the critic to help us when there can be no difference of opinion; but it is his province, when a doubt is legitimate, to bring into view all the conditions which affect the question, and determine on which side the reasonable probability lies.

There are two distinct lines of evidence. We must consider first what Hippolytus professes to do; and secondly we must compare his statements with other accounts of the system of Basilides, and see whether these statements can be justly ascribed to the heresiarch himself.

Now it seems most probable, from the connection of thought and from the recurrence of a particular name, that one authority is quoted throughout. That this authority is Basilides seems to be rendered highly probable by the following reasons. It is most unlikely that in an elaborate statement of this sort Hippolytus should fail to go to the fountain-head, and especially without giving any intimation of the fact to his readers. He introduces his account with the words, *δοκεῖ νῦν τὰ Βασιλίδων μὴ σιωπᾶν,*¹⁵ alleging that the heretic's views are those of Aristotle, not of Christ. He then devotes a few chapters to a synopsis of the doctrines of the Greek philosopher, and at the end proceeds in these words: "If, then, Basilides be found, not in effect only, but even in the very words and names, transferring¹⁶ the opinions of Aristotle into our evangelical and saving doctrine, what will remain but that, having given back the foreign elements, we prove to his

¹⁴ VII. 25, p. 368, l. 77.

¹⁵ VII. 14, p. 348.

¹⁶ μεταρροζόμενος.

disciples that Christ will profit them nothing, as they are heathen? Basilides, then, and Isidorus, the genuine son and disciple of Basilides, affirm that Matthias has spoken to them secret discourses¹⁷ which he heard from the Saviour, having been privately instructed. Let us see, then, how evidently Basilides at the same time and Isidorus and all the band of these men does not simply belie¹⁸ Matthias only, but even the Saviour himself. There was a time, he says, when there was nothing."¹⁹ From this point he proceeds with his quotations, repeatedly inserting *φησί*. It is true that in the course of his remarks he frequently alludes to Basilides and his followers in the plural number, as though he were stating the opinions of a sect rather than an individual.²⁰ In all these instances, however, he is simply giving his own statements; and he sometimes supports his statements with a quotation introduced by the usual *φησί*. The obvious inference is that he quotes Basilides, and regards him as the accepted authority for the opinions of the school. But he also several times expressly names Basilides. The following are the instances: "For Basilides altogether avoids and fears the substances of the things that have come into being according to projection"²¹; here the next sentence has *φησί*. "Basilides calls such a thing, not wing, but 'Holy Spirit.'"²² "For the things that exist are divided by Basilides into two [which are] the prominent²³ and first divisions, and are called according to him²⁴ the one thing indeed world, and the other thing supramundane [existences]"²⁵; after a few more lines of exposition there is the usual *φησίν*. "The account, therefore, which Aristotle has previously given concerning the soul and the body Basilides elucidates concerning the great Archon and his Son. For the Archon, according to Basilides, has begotten the Son," etc.; and again, two lines farther down, "according to Basilides."²⁶ Here the exposition is continued for nearly half a page, and *ὑπ' αὐτῶν* (that is, the Basilideans) introduced before *φησί* recurs. Hippolytus ends his whole dissertation on Basilides in these words, *Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἔστιν ἃ καὶ Βασιλείδης μνησθεὶς σχολάσας κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον, καὶ παρ' αὐτῶν τὴν τοσαύτην σοφίαν*

¹⁷ λόγους ἀποκρύφους.

¹⁸ καταψεύδεται, in the singular.

¹⁹ *Ἦν, φησίν, ὅτε ἦν οὐδέν.* VII. 19-20, pp. 354, 356.

²⁰ See p. 356, l. 84, 87; 358, l. 95, 9; 360, l. 32, 45, 49; 366, l. 36; 368, l. 58, 69; 370, l. 92; 372, l. 41, 42, 44; 376, l. 1, 6, 7; 378, l. 12, 13, 14.

²¹ VII. 22, p. 360, l. 26, 27.

²² VII. 22, p. 362, l. 67.

²³ *προεχέεις*, or "adjoining," if we read *προσεχέεις*.

²⁴ *κατ' αὐτόν.*

²⁵ VII. 23, p. 364, l. 8-10.

²⁶ VII. 24, p. 366, l. 46, 47, and 368, l. 50.

διδασχθεὶς ἐκαρποφόρησε τοιούτους καρπούς.²⁷ It seems to me that the only reasonable conclusion from this evidence is that the extracts which Hippolytus brings before us were taken from a work by Basilides himself, and especially as no motive is apparent for neglecting the works of the master in favor of those of any less distinguished follower.

One or two other weighty considerations must be added. Hippolytus, in his *Prooemium*, tells us in very express words the plan of his work. In order to accomplish his purpose of exposing the sources of the heresies, he will adopt a course described in these words: "It seems good, therefore, having first expounded the opinions of the philosophers of the Greeks, to show the readers that they are more ancient and more reverent towards the Divinity than these; then to compare each heresy with each [philosopher] [so as to show] that the leader of the heresy²⁸ having met with these attempts has laid claim to them, having taken their principles, and starting from these towards what was worse constructed a dogma."²⁹ After another sentence he proceeds: "In the beginning, then, we shall say who were those among the Greeks who first demonstrated natural philosophy. For the leaders of the heresies³⁰ have become doctrine-stealers³¹ of these especially, as we shall afterwards show in comparing them with one another. Rendering back his own to each of those who first began, we shall present the heresiarchs³² naked and shameful." The purpose thus clearly formed and deliberately expressed he has not forgotten, when at the opening of the Fifth Book he proceeds to his refutation. He there says: "It remains, therefore, to proceed to the refutation of the heresies, for the sake of which we have expounded the things already spoken by us, from which having taken their starting-points the heresiarchs,³³ like cobblers, having patched together, according to their own mind, the blunders of the ancients, have presented them as new to those capable of being deceived, as we shall show in the following [books]."³⁴ After these statements when Hippolytus tells us that he is going to "state the opinions of Basilides," and that he will give a synopsis of the doctrines of Aristotle, "in order that the readers, through the nearer comparison of these, may easily perceive that the [doctrines put forward] by Basilides are Aristotelian sophisms,"³⁵ and winds up by saying that "these are the fables which

²⁷ VII. 27, p. 378, l. 40-42.

²⁸ Ὁ πρωτοστάτης τῆς αἵρέσεως.

²⁹ p. 6.

³⁰ Οἱ τῶν αἵρέσεων πρωτοστατήσαντες.

³⁵ VII. 14, p. 348.

³¹ Κλεψίλογοι.

³² Τοὺς αἵρεσιάρχας.

³³ Οἱ αἵρεσιάρχαι.

³⁴ V. 6, p. 130.

Basilides tells," it does seem probable that the elaborate account, so largely given in the form of apparent quotations, is drawn from Basilides himself. This probability is still further strengthened by the summary in the Tenth Book.³⁶ Here "Isidore and the whole band" do not put in an appearance. The chapter begins, *Βασιλείδης δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς λέγει εἶναι θεὸν οὐκ ὄντα*, and ends, *Ταῦτα δὲ καὶ Βασιλείδης τερατολογῶν οὐκ αἰσχύνεται*.

Against all this, which seems to me not contemptible evidence, one fact is alleged. Hippolytus mentions Basilides and Isidore, his son, and *πᾶς ὁ τούτων χορός*, just before he begins his citations. So he does; but what does he say about them? Not that he is going to cite their opinions, and quote indiscriminately from their literature, but only that Basilides and his son affirmed that Matthias had spoken to them secret doctrines, and that father and son and the whole lot of them belied Matthias, and even the Saviour himself. Is it not the most reasonable way to endeavor to establish this last statement by drawing from the fountain-head the doctrines which were alleged to be those of Matthias? I can see no tendency in the words to prove that Hippolytus is going to depart from his plan of dealing with the leaders of the heresies, and to quote with indiscriminate carelessness any writer of the school that suits his fancy. Appeal might further be made to statements, already referred to, in which the plural number is used, showing that Hippolytus had the school in his mind. But this fact does not seem to me to establish any counter probability; for the opinions of the master may very legitimately be ascribed to the school; but it would not be legitimate, on the other hand, to ascribe to Basilides what was only the opinion of one of his unknown followers. The probabilities, therefore, appear to me to be all on one side, and make it reasonable to suppose that Hippolytus, unless he has written with almost criminal carelessness, is quoting from Basilides himself.

There is, however, a wholly different line of evidence, which, I think, when fairly considered, leads to the same result. The account which Hippolytus gives of the system of Basilides stands entirely alone, so much so that it is difficult to understand how the section of his master Irenæus upon this subject can relate to the same man. After careful comparison and sifting, our ultimate authorities for the teaching of Basilides, in addition to the Refutation of Hippolytus, are Irenæus (or the writer whom he copied), the Compendium of

³⁶ c. 14, p. 514, 516.

Hippolytus (represented by part of the account in Epiphanius, by Philaster, and the anonymous supplement to Tertullian, *De præscript. hæret.*), and also scattered statements in Clement of Alexandria, a few particulars from the Refutation of Agrippa Castor (preserved by Eusebius, H. E. IV. 7), and "probably a passing reference and quotation in the *Acts of Archelaus*."⁸⁷ We have, therefore, practically to decide whether the account of Hippolytus or that of his master Irenæus is the more authentic. Now if any one read these two accounts, knowing nothing of their origin, I think he would have no hesitation in saying that the former has far more marks of authenticity than the latter. Irenæus is content with a brief summary, and quotes from no original authority. Though he gives the doctrine as that of Basilides, there is no difficulty in supposing that he confined himself to the current opinions of the school. Hippolytus, on the other hand, produces an elaborate statement, which is evidently summarized, and to a remarkable extent quoted, from some single source; and this work, whatever it may have been, was produced by a man of thought and originality. The latter fact in itself points to Basilides, because, with the exception of his son Isidore, he was not, like Valentinus, followed by a succession of celebrated disciples. This view is confirmed by a closer inspection. Soon after the beginning of his article Irenæus introduces *dicunt*, and for the greater part of the statement is in the indirect construction. Farther on he has *utuntur*, *annuntiant*, *nituntur*, *dicunt*, *aiunt*, and a few more similar plurals. Twice, however, he has *ait*, and in one of these instances the words seem to be quoted. I think we may fairly infer from these appearances that Irenæus used a secondary source, and not the work of Basilides himself, but that this source may have contained statements which were avowedly quoted from Basilides. It is interesting, then, to inquire whether these sayings are in harmony with the representations of Hippolytus. The first saying is the following: "If any one therefore confesses the crucified, he is still a servant, and under the power of those who made bodies; but he who has denied him has been freed indeed from them, but knows the disposition of the unborn Father."⁸⁸ There is no such statement in Hippolytus, but I think it is not, in substance, inconsistent with the doctrine which he describes. The whole object of the Passion was to bring about the sorting of the things confused, and so restore everything to its proper stage of being. Accordingly the bodily part of Jesus suffered, and

⁸⁷ See Hort, in the Dictionary of Christian Biography, I. 270.

⁸⁸ Iren. I. 24, 4.

was restored to the formlessness ; the psychical part rose up, and was restored to the Hebdomad ; and he raised up that which belonged to the summit, and it remained beside the great Archon.³⁹ This doctrine would supply a philosophical ground for not confessing the Crucified ; for such a confession would be an attachment to the bodily part of Jesus, and involve a continuance in the lowest stage of being ; but the sons (the spiritual⁴⁰) were ultimately to ascend *πρὸς τὸν ἄνω πατέρα*.⁴¹ The reason given by Irenæus, that Jesus did not suffer at all, but Simon of Cyrene was crucified in his place, while Jesus looked on and laughed, is, to say the least, more worthy of commonplace followers than of the distinguished founder of the school. The other *ait* only introduces the indirect statement that prophecies were from the fabricators of the world, but the Law from their chief, who led out the people from the land of Egypt. This agrees, at least in its general idea, with the statement of Hippolytus that it was the Archon of the Hebdomad that spoke to Moses, and that all the prophets that were before the Saviour spoke from thence.⁴² It is also perhaps worth noticing that in one parenthetical passage where Hippolytus places himself in agreement with Irenæus by referring to the doctrine of three hundred and sixty-five heavens, and the name of Abrasax given in consequence to the great Archon, he does not quote, but uses the expressions *κατ' αὐτούς* and *φάσκουσι*. A simple comparison, therefore, of the two accounts seems to show that Hippolytus gives the truer representation of the original system.

We have, however, other means of judging.⁴³ Clement of Alexandria gives a quotation of some length from the twenty-third book of the Exegetica of Basilides,⁴⁴ and we are thus assured of what we might antecedently have expected, that he at all events was acquainted with the writings of the heresiarch. In the course of the Stromata he refers several times to Basilides, and several times also to his followers. In the latter instances he alludes simply to the teaching of the school, without any intimation that what is alleged is inconsistent with the doctrine of Basilides himself, except in one case in which he contrasts the immorality of the later Basilideans with the teaching of the founders of the school. It is a fair assumption, therefore, that the

³⁹ Hippol. p. 378.

⁴¹ p. 516, l. 1, 2.

⁴⁰ p. 368, l. 77, 78.

⁴² p. 370.

⁴³ The comparison with Clement of Alexandria has been well treated by Dr. Hort in the Dictionary of Christian Biography, but I have gone over the ground carefully for myself.

⁴⁴ Strom. IV. pp. 599, 600 (Potter's edition).

allusions in Clement contain, so far as they go, a much more trustworthy representation of the original system than the account of Irenæus. But we must remember that in the Stromata we have no detailed exposition, which was reserved for the lost Hypotyposes, and moreover the Stromata profess to deal with practical and moral rather than theoretical questions,⁴⁵ while Hippolytus, on his side, treats only of the general theory of the universe. It is, consequently, only in quite casual points that we can look for any contact between Clement and Hippolytus. We will notice these points of contact in the order of the system.

First, οἱ ἀμφὶ τὸν Βασιλείδην were accustomed to speak of the passions as appendages, προσαρτήματα, which were in essence spirits attached to the rational soul, "according to a primitive disturbance and confusion," κατὰ τινα τάραχον καὶ σύγχυσιν ἀρχικὴν.⁴⁶ This description is regarded as representing ὁ κατὰ Βασιλείδην ἄνθρωπος, so that here the teaching of the followers is expressly identified with that of the master. This "primitive confusion" receives its explanation from the doctrine of a σπέρμα κόσμον, which was the first creation, and contained in itself πᾶσαν τὴν τοῦ κόσμου πανσπερμίαν, that is to say, all the seminal principles of the universe.⁴⁷ The whole hypothesis turned on this σύγχυσις οἰονεὶ πανσπερμίας,⁴⁸ which existed ἐν ἀρχῇ.⁴⁹ The confusion is frequently expressed by the term ἀμορφία.⁵⁰ It deserves notice that in arguing against the Basilideans Clement refers to τοῦ σπέρματος τῆς ἄνωθεν οὐσίας, and τὸ ἄνωθεν σπέρμα, existing in man.⁵¹ The system expounded by Hippolytus explains this.

Secondly, in speaking of election, Basilides distinguishes between the κόσμος and that which is ὑπερκόσμον.⁵² The same distinction between the cosmic and the hypercosmic is ascribed to the followers of Basilides.⁵³ Hippolytus tells us that Basilides divided τὰ ὄντα into two principal classes, which he called κόσμος and ὑπερκόσμος.⁵⁴

Thirdly, in connection with this distinction the followers of Basilides spoke of an appropriate faith and election according to each interval or stage of being, καθ' ἕκαστον διάστημα.⁵⁵ We learn from its

⁴⁵ See Hort, who gives references.

⁴⁶ Clem. Strom. II. 20, p. 488.

⁴⁷ Hippol. VII. 21.

⁴⁸ p. 364, l. 95; 370, l. 5; 374, l. 48, 49; 378, l. 22, 24, 25, 38.

⁴⁹ Strom. II. 8, p. 449.

⁵⁰ Οἱ ἀπὸ Βασ., Strom. II. 3, p. 434.

⁵¹ c. 23, p. 364, l. 8-10. See also c. 25, beginning; c. 23, p. 366, l. 23; c. 27, p. 376, l. 8.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* c. 27, near end.

⁴⁹ p. 376, l. 95.

⁵² Strom. IV. 26, p. 639.

⁵⁶ Strom. II. 3, p. 434.

frequent use in Hippolytus that *διάστημα* was the regular term for denoting successive spheres of existence.⁵⁶

Fourthly, Basilides supposes that justice and her daughter peace remain in the ogdoad.⁵⁷ According to Hippolytus what was called the ogdoad was the realm of the great Archon, who with the help of his wiser son, created the ethereal region beyond the moon.⁵⁸ He does not, however, inform us why it was so named, or how the number eight was made up.

Fifthly, Clement alludes to the Archon as "the very great God, celebrated in song by them."⁵⁹ If we took the superlative in the sense of the greatest of all, it would not be true to the system described by Hippolytus; but the sense of "very great" is sufficient for the argument, and is indeed, as we shall see, implied by the context. Hippolytus says that the great Archon throbbled through⁶⁰ and was born from the cosmic seed, and was the head of the Cosmos, a beauty and greatness and power incapable of dissolution; "for, he says, he is more unspeakable than unspeakable things, and more powerful than things powerful, and wiser than things wise, and better than all the beautiful things whatsoever thou mayest mention."⁶¹ Farther on he is called *τὸν ἀρρήτων ἀρρητότερον θεόν*.⁶² Still, as we shall see under the next head, he had his limitations.

Sixthly, Clement makes a very remarkable statement about the Archon. The followers of Basilides interpreting the saying, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom," "affirm that the Archon himself, when he heard the declaration of the ministering Spirit, was astonished at what he heard and saw, having had a gospel preached to him beyond his hopes,⁶³ and that his astonishment was called fear, and became the beginning of wisdom that sorts and distinguishes and perfects and restores." What this gospel was, and how it came, we are not told; nor is it explained why the Archon was so astonished. We only learn from a later allusion that before his astonishment he was in ignorance.⁶⁴ When we turn to Hippolytus, all becomes clear. The Holy Spirit, being unable to ascend to the highest regions, remained as a firmament between the hypercosmical things and the Cos-

⁵⁶ c. 22, p. 364, l. 95; c. 24, p. 368, l. 63; c. 25, p. 370, l. 80, 88; c. 26, p. 372, l. 41; c. 27, p. 374, l. 77; p. 376, l. 79; p. 378, l. 21.

⁵⁷ Strom. IV. 25, p. 637.

⁵⁸ c. 23, 24.

⁵⁹ *Τὸν μέγιστον καὶ πρὸς αὐτῶν ἀνυμνούμενον θεόν*, Strom. II. 8, p. 449.

⁶⁰ *Διέσφυξε*.

⁶² c. 24, p. 368, l. 51.

⁶¹ c. 23, p. 366.

⁶³ *Παρ' ἐλπιδας εὐγγελισμένον*.

⁶⁴ *Ἄγνοια*. See Strom. II. 8, p. 448, 449.

mos ; and, when the great Archon was born from the cosmic seed, he ascended as far as the firmament, which he took for the ultimate limit. He was wiser and more powerful than everything beneath, except the remnant of sonship that was still left in the πανσπερμία ; and, since he was ignorant⁶⁵ that this sonship was wiser and better than himself, he thought that he was Lord and Sovereign. However, he produced a son much better and wiser than himself, whom he seated at his right hand.⁶⁶ The gospel came, not by descent, but by action at a distance ; for the power of sonship in the midst of the Holy Spirit in the border-region communicated the thoughts of sonship to the son of the great Archon.⁶⁷ The gospel came first to the Archon through his son, and the Archon learned that he was not God of the Universe, but was begotten, and had above him the treasure of the unspeakable and unnameable Not-Being and of the sonship ; and he feared, understanding in what ignorance he was.⁶⁸ "This," he says, "is what has been said, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." This is the wisdom of which the Scripture says, "Not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Spirit teaches."

Seventhly, under the last head we met a wisdom that sorts and restores, φυλοκρηνητική and ἀποκαταστατική, and on the next page there is a reference to the φυλοκρήνησις and ἀποκατάστασις. With this we may connect one or two statements which serve to illustrate the process. "The followers of Basilides affirm that there is at the same time an appropriate⁶⁹ faith and election according to each stage of being ; and conformably again to the hypercosmic election the cosmic faith of all nature follows ; and that the gift of faith too is correspondent with the hope of each."⁷⁰ The meaning apparently is that each stage of being has its predetermined end which it may hope to attain, and is provided with a faith adapted to the attainment of this end. Agreeably to this view Basilides represented the election as foreign to the Cosmos, since it was by nature hypercosmic,⁷¹ and supposed that man knew God by nature, so that faith was not the rational assent of a self-determining soul, but a beauty of immediate creation.⁷² We may suppose, then, that part of the process of sorting and restoring consists in separating the election from the Cosmos, and restoring it

⁶⁵ Ἡγνῶει.

⁶⁶ c. 23, p. 366.

⁶⁷ c. 25, p. 370.

⁷¹ Strom. IV. 26, p. 639.

⁷² Strom. V. 1, p. 644, 645. See also II. 3, beginning, p. 433.

⁶⁸ Ἐν οἴῳ ἦν ἀγνοία.

⁶⁹ Οἰκείαν.

⁷⁰ Strom. II. 3, p. 434.

to the hypercosmic place which naturally belongs to it. Hippolytus does not deal with election and faith; but his statements, so far as they relate to the same subjects, are in complete agreement with the representations of Clement. The third sonship, requiring purification, remained behind in the great heap of the *πανσπερμία*, when the other two sonships had gone aloft;⁷³ and this sonship was in time to be revealed and restored⁷⁴ to the higher region, above the limiting spirit; and Basilides said that the spiritual men were sons left behind to fashion and make perfect the souls below, that had a nature to remain in this stage of being.⁷⁵ Here there is clearly a doctrine of election, though the word is not used, and also the idea of a superior nature confined for a time within the lower, from which it was destined to be restored to the place which properly belonged to it. To effect this the Gospel came.⁷⁶ And when the whole Sonship was above the limiting Spirit, then the creation would be pitied, and God would bring upon the whole Cosmos "the great ignorance," in order that all things might remain according to nature, and nothing desire anything that was contrary to nature. Thus there would be a restoration⁷⁷ of all things in their own seasons. For their whole hypothesis is *σύγχυσις οἰονὲ πανσπερμίας καὶ φυλοκρίνησις καὶ ἀποκατάστασις τῶν συγκεχυμένων εἰς τὰ οἰκεία*.⁷⁸ Jesus became the first-fruits of the sorting,⁷⁹ and the whole object of the Passion was that the things confused might be sorted.⁸⁰

These coincidences in thought and phraseology are sufficiently remarkable to establish a close relationship between the account of Hippolytus and the genuine Basilides, and to prove that he is nearer the original source than Irenæus and other writers, who contain hardly a trace of the system which was in the hands of Clement, and none of its characteristic terms. Indeed, so irreconcilable is the account of Irenæus with the allusions of Clement, that, before the publication of Hippolytus, Neander remarked that "had not Clement of Alexandria spoken of the existence among certain false followers of Basilides of practical errors precisely similar to those we meet with in this sect, we might be led to suspect that the so-called Basilideans of Irenæus had no connection whatever with Basilides."⁸¹

⁷³ c. 22.

⁷⁴ Ἀποκατασταθῆναι.

⁷⁵ c. 25.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Ἀποκατάστασις.

⁷⁸ The Greek is found p. 378, l. 33-35.

⁷⁹ Φυλοκρίνησις.

⁸⁰ c. 27, p. 378, l. 35 sq.

⁸¹ History of the Christian Religion and Church, II., p. 113, note †, Bohn's edition.

On the other hand, we are justified by the above coincidences in asserting that the Basilides of Hippolytus is the same as the Basilides of Clement.

It may be well, however, to produce positive proof that Irenæus does not describe the opinions of the founder of the sect; for we have stronger evidence than the mere want of coincidence with Clement's scattered allusions. He says that, in the view which he is describing, Jesus did not suffer, but made Simon of Cyrene suffer in his place, and seems to imply a thoroughly Docetic notion of his person. By later writers this Docetism is unmistakably affirmed.⁸² Not only is there no trace of this in Clement, but the reality of Christ's humanity and Passion is assumed, even though it drives Basilides to a conclusion which he is reluctant to admit. He thinks that all suffering is a punishment for sin, either actual or potential, in the person suffering; and when pressed with the case of "such a one,"⁸³ that he sinned, for he suffered, he would answer he did not sin, but was like the suffering infant. But if urged, he would say, that man, whomsoever you may name, is man, and God is just. Clement, in reasoning upon this view, says that Basilides dared to call the Lord *ἄθροπον ἁμαρτητικόν*.⁸⁴ This is the passage where the twenty-third book of the Exegetica is quoted, so that there can be no doubt that the real Basilides was anything but a Docetist, and that Irenæus was ignorant of his teaching. On the other hand, Hippolytus distinctly recognizes the necessity of the Passion⁸⁵ to inaugurate the final sorting and restoration, and sets Docetism aside by affirming that the bodily part of Jesus suffered.⁸⁶ He moreover makes the very important statement that after the birth of Jesus "all the things relating to the Saviour happened according to them⁸⁷ in the same way as they have been written in the Gospels";⁸⁸ for this shows that he identifies the doctrine of the followers with that of the Master, and not *vice versa*, since he deliberately contradicts the account given by Irenæus of the later and degenerate school. He does not touch on the moral question, as this did not come within the scope of his plan.

Again, Irenæus says they recognized the moral indifference of actions, and of universal licentiousness. Epiphanius attributes the

⁸² Pseudo-Tert.; Epiph. Hær. XXIV. 4.

⁸³ Ὁ δεινα, understood by Clement, who had the context before him, to mean Christ.

⁸⁶ p. 378.

⁸⁴ Strom. IV. 12, p. 600 sq.

⁸⁷ Κατ' αὐτοῦς.

⁸⁵ Τὸ πάθος.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

most immoral teaching to Basilides himself.⁸⁹ Clement tells us that Basilideans, who were evidently (from the context) living in his own time, were more intemperate than those who were most intemperate among the Gentiles, and they defended their evil lives by an abuse of the real principles of Basilides, for they pleaded that they had authority even to sin on account of their perfection, or that they would certainly be saved even if they sinned now, on account of the inborn election. But he is so far from ascribing immoral teaching to Basilides himself that he warns these unworthy followers that the forefathers of their dogmas did not allow them to do these things; and he quotes a passage from the Ethics of Isidorus in order to confute them.⁹⁰ This is a point on which Hippolytus does not touch, and there is nothing in his account to suggest that Basilides was anything but a high-minded man.

I think, then, we may say that it is demonstrated that Irenæus does not represent the opinions of the heresiarch.

We do not appreciate the full meaning of Hippolytus' departure from Irenæus till we observe that he not only was acquainted with the work of the latter against heresies, and made use of it in his treatise, but that in immediate connection with Basilides he transcribed a whole section, without acknowledgment, from the older writer. Irenæus classes together Saturninus or Satornilus and Basilides, and treats first of the former. Hippolytus also places the two in juxtaposition, but reverses the order. The article on the Syrian heretic he simply copies from his predecessor. But of Basilides he gives a far fuller and entirely different account. What could induce him to do so except the discovery that Irenæus was ill-informed, and the acquisition of what he believed to be the authentic source of the heresy? He may have made it his business to procure a copy of the Exegetica, or induced some friend in Alexandria (possibly Origen?) to send him the necessary extracts. At all events he rejects the follies current in the West, and brings before us the same strong and serious thinker that we meet in Clement.

One other consideration remains. Clement, as has been said, gives us a quotation of some length from Basilides; does it admit of any fruitful comparison with Hippolytus? I think it does, though the subject treated does not fall within the range of the cosmical theory. It is a favorite notion in Hippolytus that the third sonship was left behind in the *πανσπερμία, εὐεργετῆν καὶ εὐεργετῆσθαι*.⁹¹ It is therefore

⁸⁹ Hær. XXIV. 3.

⁹⁰ Strom. III. 1, pp. 509, 510.

⁹¹ p. 364, l. 2, 3; 368, l. 71; 374, l. 64, 65; 378, l. 31, 39.

noticeable that, in Clement's extract, the infant who suffers without having previously sinned (at least in the present world) *εὐεργετῆται*. Another resemblance is found in the frequency with which the first person singular is used, *φημί, λέγω, ἴδω, ἐρῶ* (five times). We have seen that the first person is similarly used in the quotations of Hippolytus, and I venture to suggest that this feature is more suited to the master defending his own thesis than to some obscure disciple arguing on behalf of another. These are certainly minor points, but they are not without their interest and value in connection with the more substantial argument which has preceded.

It may be worth while noticing in this connection that in another passage where Clement cites the opinion of Basilides, though he does not quote him *verbatim*,⁹² we meet the words *οὐσία, φύσις, ὑπόστασις, συγκατάθεσις, κτίσις*, showing so far as they go, the Greek character of the system. Of these words we meet in Hippolytus with *φύσις*,⁹³ *οὐσία*,⁹⁴ and *κτίσις*.⁹⁵ The two former words are far too common in philosophical discussion for any stress to be laid on them; but the doctrine that a man knows God by nature falls in with the picture of the regulative power of nature presented by Hippolytus.

To complete our investigation we must consider the evidence which is advanced to prove that the system described by Hippolytus is of later date than that which we find in Irenæus. The question has been re-examined by Hans Stähelin in Gebhart and Harnack, *Texte und Untersuchungen, VI. Band, Heft 3*, in an essay on *Die gnostischen Quellen Hippolyts*, u. s. w., 1890. The author starts with a reference to an article by Dr. Salmon, on "The cross-references in the 'Philosophumena,'" which appeared in *Hermathena* in 1885.⁹⁶ Dr. Salmon pointed out that there were several suspicious agreements between the alleged writings of different sects quoted by Hippolytus; and among other hypotheses by which these might be explained, he suggested that possibly some forger had passed them off upon a writer who was known to be a collector of such goods. The main purpose of Stähelin is to examine thoroughly the question which was thus raised; but he does not confine himself to this line of argument. The more obscure heresies do not at present concern us, and we must restrict our inquiry to the case of Basilides.

⁹² Strom. V. 1, p. 645.

⁹³ p. 362, l. 78-80; p. 368, l. 64; p. 374, l. 76; p. 376, l. 78, 86, 93, 94, 4.

⁹⁴ p. 358, l. 89; p. 360, l. 23, 27.

⁹⁵ p. 360, l. 20; p. 366, l. 37; p. 372, l. 31; p. 376, l. 92, as well as in a passage quoted from St. Paul, p. 368, l. 75; p. 370, l. 96.

⁹⁶ p. 389-402.

The hypothesis of forgery would seem to me extremely precarious if there were far more resemblances of thought and language than are actually found between the Basilides of Hippolytus and his other heretics ; for forms of opinion and of speech are apt to become current at any given time, and there is no improbability in the supposition that successive heretics were acquainted with the writings of their predecessors, and may even have unconsciously borrowed from them many a phrase or metaphor. However, the points of contact in the chapters on Basilides are very few. The one on which Stähelin⁹⁷ relies most is merely an emphatic way of expressing "every possible thing." In four parallel passages there is some resemblance in the turn of expression, and in all of them some part of the very ordinary word *παραλείπω* occurs ; but the phrases in each case are different, and afford no proof of direct literary connection.⁹⁸

Another parallel with the Sethians is pointed out,⁹⁹ which is much more striking at first sight than it is on closer examination. The Sethians had two principles, light and darkness. Between them was pure spirit ; and this spirit (or breath) was not like a wind or a breeze, but like "an odor of an unguent or of incense."¹⁰⁰ Under Basilides we are told that the Holy Spirit retained an odor of the sonship which had left it, as a vessel, though empty, retains "an odor of an unguent"¹⁰¹ which was once within it.¹⁰² Here the notion of a sweet-smelling unguent is connected with the Spirit ; but it is employed in one case to distinguish the Spirit from anything so rough and strong as wind, whereas with Basilides the Spirit is the *σπερέωμα*, and the figure of the unguent is totally different. The latter has a far closer parallel in Horace, — "Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem Testa diu."¹⁰³ The two figures borrowed from a perfume are each so apt for the purpose of the writer that they may easily be independent of one another ; and the common notion of a dividing Spirit has its source evidently in Genesis i.

Another parallel to the Sethians is found in the fact that, according to them, the object of Christ's coming was "to disunite and separate the things that have been mingled."¹⁰⁴ This is proved by the saying, "I came not to bring peace on the earth, but a sword." So Basilides

⁹⁷ p. 52 sq.

⁹⁸ The passages are p. 200, l. 60 sq. ; p. 238, l. 90 sq. ; p. 358, l. 16 sq. ; p. 426, l. 19 sq.

⁹⁹ p. 27.

¹⁰⁰ *μύρου τις ὀσμή ἢ θυμάματος*, V. 19, p. 200, l. 71.

¹⁰¹ *μύρου ὀσμή*.

¹⁰² VII. 22, p. 364, l. 87 sq.

¹⁰³ Ep. I. ii. 69, 70.

¹⁰⁴ V. 21, p. 212, l. 61, *διχάσαι καὶ χωρίσαι τὰ συγκεκραμένα*. Stähelin, p. 26 sq.

is made to say that Jesus is "the first-fruits of the sorting of the things that have been confused."¹⁰⁵ Here the resemblance is confined to the idea; for the words are quite different. But the ideas, when examined, are found to belong to opposite schools of thought. The Sethians were dualists, or rather believers in *three* principles, and maintained that the consummation of things consisted in the separation of the light and the Spirit from the darkness; Basilides was a monist, and supposed that the world-process consisted in evolving and sorting into distinct classes the implicit and mingled contents of the cosmic seed. The fact that Basilides refers to the creative Word in Genesis, and has a couple of allusions to light as representing the good influences from above, can prove nothing; for figures borrowed from light are a common property of religious thinkers. The two systems are utterly different, and unlike in everything except the very casual resemblances which have been mentioned. On the other hand, there is a connection between the Sethians and the Basilideans of Clement in the use of the word *τάραχος*.¹⁰⁶ It would be strange indeed if in a mass of speculation belonging to the same period of the world's thought, and to schools more or less closely related to one another, we did not find resemblances quite as marked as those which have been produced.

Dr. Salmon calls attention to the mention of naphtha in illustration of the thought; but in the case of the Peratæ¹⁰⁷ the point of the comparison is that naphtha draws fire to itself, but nothing else, whereas with Basilides¹⁰⁸ it is that it acts on fire even at a very great distance. Stähelin admits that the figure was too common to serve the purpose of the argument.¹⁰⁹

That there should be some similarities between Basilides and Valentinus, who were contemporary teachers, and both trained in Alexandrian learning, is not surprising. Stähelin¹¹⁰ points out a connection between the great Archon of the one and the Demiurge of the other; each supposed that he was the supreme God. But there the resemblance ends. The Demiurge of Valentinus is *μωρὸς καὶ ἄνους*, and does not know that he is the unwitting instrument of wisdom in the creation of the world.¹¹¹ What a contrast this presents to the description of the great Archon already given, *ὁ μέγας σοφός*, who made things with the recognized help of his wiser Son.¹¹² Again, Valentinus

¹⁰⁵ p. 378, l. 16, 17, ἀπαρχὴ τῆς φυλοκρινήσεως . . . τῶν συγκεχυμένων.

¹⁰⁶ p. 204, l. 50.

¹⁰⁹ p. 54.

¹¹⁰ p. 28 sqq.

¹⁰⁷ p. 198, l. 33, 34.

¹¹¹ VI. 33, 34, p. 282, l. 22, 23; p. 284, l. 72-75.

¹⁰⁸ p. 370, l. 3, 4.

¹¹² p. 366, l. 38-40.

applies the verse in Proverbs, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," to the Demiurge,¹¹⁸ as Basilides does to the great Archon. He does so, however, in a totally different connection. We have seen that Clement supports Hippolytus in saying that the Basilideans applied this verse to the astonishment of the Archon; and in the same place Clement expresses the opinion that Valentinus had similar thoughts in his mind in a passage quoted from an epistle of his. This may show that Clement did not remember any more direct application of the text by Valentinus, and is, so far, unfavorable to the article on that heretic; but it only confirms the account of Basilides. That both make a similar use of "the revelation of the sons of God," and of the saying "I am the God of Abraham," etc.; that both distinguish the God of the Old Testament from the Supreme Being; and that both adopt the term "Hebdomad," is no more than might be reasonably expected, for we are not comparing two systems which originated in China and Peru, but two which sprang out of the same contemporaneous culture and the same tendencies of thought, and between which there might be a direct literary connection.

Dr. Salmon, who suspects this Basilides to be a Valentinian in disguise, calls attention to the Valentinian technical words, *δημιουργός*, *ἔκτρωμα*, *τόπος*. *Δημιουργός*, however, is a very common word for creator, and it is not used in any technical sense by Basilides. He uses *δημιουργήσαντος* of the Supreme Not-being God.¹¹⁴ The term *δημιουργός* is applied to both Archons.¹¹⁵ Moreover, this sort of language is not confined to the account in Hippolytus. In the short article of Theodoret¹¹⁶ we find *δημιουργία* and *δημιουργήσαι*. *Ἐκτρωμα* is used once, of the sonship left behind in the formlessness; but it is obvious from the context that the expression is borrowed from St. Paul,¹¹⁷ and not from Valentinus, the whole conception being supported by quotations from the Epistles, and an application of the Apostle's experience to the destinies of this third sonship. The word *τόπος* is found twice: "This place is called Hebdomad,"¹¹⁸ and, the first sonship left the Holy Spirit "in an appropriate place."¹¹⁹ "Place" is not a very distinctive word, and as a variation from *τόπος* we meet with *χωρίον*¹²⁰ and *χώρα*.¹²¹ Epiphanius too employs the word *τοπο-*

¹¹⁸ p. 280, l. 96-98.

¹¹⁴ p. 362, l. 77.

¹¹⁵ To the great one, p. 366, l. 38, 40; to the second, p. 368, l. 60; p. 378, l. 20. Once the reference is not quite clear, p. 374, l. 62.

¹¹⁶ Hæret. fab. compend. I. iv.

¹¹⁹ p. 376, l. 5.

¹¹⁷ I Cor. xv. 8.

¹²⁰ p. 362, l. 82; p. 364, l. 84, 85.

¹¹⁸ p. 368, l. 59.

¹²¹ p. 376, l. 85.

θεσία in describing the system of Basilides,¹²² and Irenæus mentions the *locales positiones* of the heavens. Clement, too, in arguing against Basilides refers to cosmic things as τὸν τόπον.¹²³ Some such terms are required by the theory; but διάστημα is the technical word. We may concede that the “μεθόριον πνεῦμα of this Basilides” is “closely related to the Valentinian ὄρος.” But the ideas which are represented by such phrases may be common to two systems which are fundamentally distinct. We have a more striking example of the use of the same technical term in Epiphanius’ express ascription to the Basilideans of the word ὑστέρημα,¹²⁴ which we associate with the doctrine of Valentinus. It is also to be observed that Clement more than once couples Basilides or his followers with Valentinus. He does so in the passage already referred to about “the fear of the Lord.” He does so again in connection with the Basilidean doctrine that the passions were appendages¹²⁵ to the soul,¹²⁶ and once more in reference to the natural eternity of genus.¹²⁷ I am therefore unable to see that the common terms and ideas which faintly tinge these two systems have any tendency to prove that the account in Hippolytus is a Valentinian forgery.¹²⁸

Stähelin seems to feel how very precarious this line of reasoning is, and relies more upon the internal inconsistencies and follies of the system described by Hippolytus, and its deviations from older and more authentic accounts. One or two slight inconsistencies of expression, such as the ascription of beauty to the “Not-being God,” who was above all predicates, are no proof of want of originality. These are only the inevitable failure of even strong thinkers to maintain themselves throughout at the same high level of abstract thought. There is, however, one inconsistency which may be considered too serious to be reconciled with unity of authorship. In speaking of the three hundred and sixty-five heavens the writer appears to commit himself to a system of emanation instead of his usual evolution.¹²⁹ The passage does not expressly describe a system of emanation; but I fully admit that it does not seem of a piece with the rest of the account. But then, unfortunately for the argument, it is a parenthesis which fits rather uneasily into its place, and is not in the least required; and, as we have seen, it is ascribed, not to Basilides, but to the Basilideans. I am inclined to think that Hippolytus has here

¹²² Hær. XXIV. 7.

¹²³ Strom. IV. 26, p. 639.

¹²⁴ l.c. 8.

¹²⁵ Προσαρτήματα.

¹²⁶ Strom. II. 20, p. 488.

¹²⁷ Γένος. Strom. IV. 13, p. 603.

¹²⁸ See p. 402 of Dr. Salmon’s article.

¹²⁹ Stähelin, p. 81.

inserted an incongruous feature derived from his knowledge of the later and degenerate school.

In comparing Hippolytus with other writers Stähelin¹³⁰ quietly classes Irenæus and Clement together, and finds that the deviations come under two heads: first, Hippolytus teaches a system of evolution, and the others one of emanation; secondly, the former presents a monistic, the latter a dualistic scheme. This classification of authorities cannot be admitted. We have seen that Hippolytus and Clement stand together against Irenæus, and that the latter cannot be regarded as an authority for the teaching of the founder of the school. Stähelin makes no attempt to meet the arguments by which this is established, and does not seem aware of their existence. In estimating the alleged deviations, therefore, we may confine our attention to Clement and Hippolytus.

It is perfectly true that Hippolytus not only describes a monistic system, but asserts in the strongest way that Basilides was a monist, and specially avoided emanation; for what sort of emanation, he makes him ask, or what sort of matter, could God require to work up a cosmos, like a spider spinning its threads, or a man working up bronze or wood?¹³¹ This statement is the more noticeable because it is such an express contradiction to the known view of Irenæus, and Hippolytus must have been convinced that he had the authority of Basilides himself for making it. But what does Clement say? Unfortunately he is absolutely silent on this point. Stähelin cites only two neutral statements as evidence that Clement agrees with Irenæus on this subject. One is that justice and peace are included in the ogdoad.¹³² As Irenæus does not mention justice, peace, or an ogdoad, this reference does not go far in proving the agreement of the two writers; and the only way in which a doctrine of emanation can be extracted from it is by piecing it on to Irenæus' account of the derivation of Nûs, Logos, etc., — a proceeding which is quite unwarrantable. By way of a second statement it is alleged that Clement makes the Nûs or διάκονος of the highest God come down, and unite himself with the man Jesus from the baptism to the Passion.¹³³ If this were correct, it would not establish a doctrine of emanation; but it is not correct, for Clement only says that the Basilideans affirmed that the

¹³⁰ See p. 88 sqq.

¹³¹ c. 22, p. 360, l. 25 sqq. The word for emanation is *προβολή*. Epiphanius says the *νοῦς*, etc., *προβέβληται* (l.c. 1), for which Irenæus has *natum*. Pseudo-Tert. has *probolas*; Theodoret, *προβληθῆναι*.

¹³² Strom. IV. 25, p. 637.

¹³³ Excerpt. ex Theod. XVI. p. 962.

dove was the *διάκονος*. The rest of the statement is made up out of Irenæus, — a most misleading way of presenting evidence, for there is nothing elsewhere in Clement to justify it.¹⁸⁴ Stähelin thinks that the authority which Hippolytus follows retained, inconsistently, some traces of the original doctrine of emanation. We have already discussed the reference to the three hundred and sixty-five heavens; and we need only add now that they are called *κτίσεις*, and not emanations. In what way the ascription of beauty to the Supreme points to emanation I confess I am unable to comprehend, and therefore cannot estimate the force of the mysterious argument which I suppose it must contain.

In coming to the alleged dualism Stähelin has to admit that there is nothing about it in Irenæus; ¹⁸⁵ but he roundly asserts that according to Clement the system was dualistic.¹⁸⁶ If this were true, our whole argument would have to be abandoned, for the coincidences which have been pointed out could not be weighed against a difference so fundamental. But the evidence in support of this confident statement is of the most shadowy description. Clement charges Basilides with making the devil divine, because he regarded the sufferings of martyrdom as a punishment (though an honorable one) for sin committed in a previous life; and he farther promises to discuss the doctrines of metempsychosis and of the devil on a proper occasion.¹⁸⁷ Therefore, says Hilgenfeld,¹⁸⁸ Basilides' doctrine of the devil must have been as peculiar as his doctrine of metempsychosis; and wherein can its peculiarity have consisted except in its dualism? We might readily answer, in anything rather than dualism; for the ordinary doctrine of the devil touches dualism so closely that it is in some danger of being confounded with it. And certainly the expression "making the devil divine" ¹⁸⁹ points rather to the rigid monism of a pantheistic hypothesis. This interpretation exactly suits the argument, so far as it is unfolded. Clement thought that martyrdoms were due to a power hostile to God, and that in enduring them Christians were fighting on the side of God against the devil. Basilides could not admit the existence of a power hostile to God, and, as he believed that God would not inflict suffering except as a punishment for sin, he was obliged to suppose that martyrdoms were punish-

¹⁸⁴ The *διάκονος* is alluded to in connection with the Baptism in Strom. II. 8, p. 449, but without any explanation of its meaning.

¹⁸⁵ p. 89.

¹⁸⁶ p. 92.

¹⁸⁷ Strom. IV. 12, p. 601.

¹⁸⁸ Ketzergeschichte, p. 221, quoted by Stähelin, p. 90.

¹⁸⁹ *Θεϊζῶν τὸν διάβολον.*

ments. The peculiarity, therefore, of his doctrine of the devil must have been that he regarded the devil as the instrument of God, who helped to put his penal providence into execution. This divine devil, accordingly, seems to prove that the Basilides of Clement was a monist, and not a dualist, and must have been sufficiently peculiar to deserve notice on a proper occasion.¹⁴⁰

The only other argument is too frail to grasp. There might be a primitive confusion, and passions might be regarded as appendages, under either form of doctrine; for every system must admit the reality of differentiation, the existence of multiplicity and incongruity being the given fact which has to be explained. Which form of explanation Basilides adopted, Clement does not inform us; and I cannot concede that in retaining the words, confusion, sorting, restoration, Hippolytus is allowing the original dualism to peep through; for no one who was not engaged upon an inquisition would feel the impropriety of the language. As to the *προσαρτήματα*, these are not offshoots from a positive realm of evil, but the clinging qualities of the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral in us; and virtue consists in overcoming this *τῆς ἐλάττωνος ἐν ἡμῖν κτίσεως*.¹⁴¹ Such a view is quite in harmony with a monistic system of evolution.

An argument of a different kind is founded on the resemblances, already dealt with, between the Sethians and Basilides; for these resemblances, says Stähelin, show that the latter must have been originally as dualistic as the former.¹⁴² This argument rests on the assumption that a monist may not on any account use a figure or a phrase which has ever been employed by a dualist, and it is difficult to see the validity of this canon of criticism. But if the article on the Sethians be, as is alleged, a forgery, we arrive at the still stranger canon that no monist can use a figure or a phrase which it is possible for any forger of a dualistic system within a century afterwards to adopt. Such arguments only betray the weakness of the cause which they are intended to support.

The one really serious argument remains. There is extant in a Latin translation "The Acts of the Disputation between Archelaus and Manes."¹⁴³ These Acts appear to be as early as the fourth cen-

¹⁴⁰ This explanation, which I reached quite independently, was suggested by Gieseler (*Theol. Stud. u. Kritik.*, 1830, p. 379), as I learn from Jacobi, *Das ursprüngliche Basilidianische System*, in the *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 1877, Vol. I. p. 528.

¹⁴¹ Quoted from Isidore, *Strom.* II. 20, p. 488.

¹⁴² p. 27 sq., 80, 81.

¹⁴³ Routh, *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, Vol. V.

ture, if not written at the end of the third;¹⁴⁴ but the author is unknown, and it is not certain whether they were originally written in Greek or Syriac.¹⁴⁵ We there¹⁴⁶ learn that "there was also a preacher among the Persians, a certain Basilides, of greater antiquity, not long after the times of our Apostles, who being himself also a crafty man, and seeing that at that time everything was already preoccupied, wished to maintain that dualism which was also in favor with Scythianus." The writer "cites the beginning of the thirteenth book of his treatises (tractatum), in which it was said that 'the saving word' (the Gospel) by means of the parable of the rich man and the poor man pointed out the source from which nature (or a nature) without a root and without a place germinated and extended itself over things (rebus supervenientem, unde pullulaverit). He breaks off a few words later, and adds that after some five hundred lines Basilides invites his reader to abandon idle and curious elaborateness (varietate), and to investigate rather the studies and opinions of barbarians on good and evil. Certain of them, Basilides states, said that there are two beginnings of all things, light and darkness."¹⁴⁷ The date of this Basilides, the thirteen books, and the exposition of a parable seem to point to our Alexandrian heresiarch, and this is confirmed by the reference to barbarians, for we learn from Agrippa Castor, alleged by Eusebius to be a contemporary writer, that Basilides "named as prophets to himself Barcabbas and Barcoph, appointing also some other non-existent persons, and that he assigned to them barbarous appellations to astonish those who stand in awe of such things";¹⁴⁸ but I confess I cannot recognize him in a "preacher among the Persians," and a man who "had nothing of his own to assert." The writer, too, has previously mentioned the heretic along with Marcion and Valentinus,¹⁴⁹ so that we might expect some indication that the same person was referred to, even though the two passages are addressed to different people. Dr. Hort thinks "the evidence for the identity of the two writers may on the whole be

¹⁴⁴ Jacobi gives reasons for placing them shortly before or after 325 A.D. L.c. p. 496 sq.

¹⁴⁵ Jacobi tries to show that the author wrote in Greek, and probably belonged to Egypt. L.c. p. 493 sqq. Harnack thinks the original was Syriac, appealing to the authority of K. Kessler (Die Acta Archelai und das Diatessaron Tatians, 1883, in the Texte und Untersuchungen, Vol. I. p. 137 sq.).

¹⁴⁶ Cap. LV.

¹⁴⁷ Dr. Hort, in the Dictionary of Christian Biography, I. p. 276 b.

¹⁴⁸ Euseb. H. E. IV. 7.

¹⁴⁹ Cap. XXXVIII.

treated as preponderating"; but certainly the question is by no means free from doubt.¹⁶⁰ If we assume the identity, we have to consider the value to be attached to the statements of the writer. We do not know who he was. He has made a strange blunder in calling Basilides a preacher among the Persians. He asserts that all Basilides' books "contain things difficult and rugged," so that he may conceivably have misunderstood what was before him. As Dr. Hort points out, "his language . . . is loose, as if he were not sure of his ground; and the quotation which he gives by no means bears him out. . . . It assuredly requires considerable straining to draw the brief interpretation given of the parable to a Manichean position, and there is nothing to show that the author of it himself adopted the first set of 'barbarian' opinions which he reported. Indeed, the description of evil (for evil doubtless is intended) as a *supervenient* nature, *without root* and without place, reads almost as if it were directed against Persian doctrine, and may be fairly interpreted by Basilides' comparison of pain and fear to the rust of iron as natural accidents." I think this is just criticism, and that we cannot place much confidence in the judgment of our anonymous informant. Jacobi believes that this passage was cited to illustrate the obscurity, and not the dualism, of Basilides. But, however this may be, he is in full agreement with the interpretation of the passage given by Dr. Hort, and points out that it contradicts the doctrine ascribed by implication to Basilides in Epiphanius' reference to a *ρίζα τοῦ κακοῦ*,¹⁶¹ and further that, in proper dualism, the evil principle could not be described as "poor."¹⁶² It appears, therefore, that, if this citation has preserved a genuine fragment of Basilides, it confirms, instead of contradicting, the results of our investigation. The writer introduces the second quotation only that he may confirm by "certain testimonies" his assertion that Scythianus was the real founder of the dualism preached by Manes, and that this Scythianus was a barbarian. It is quite appropriate, therefore, to quote a passage from Basilides in which he says that some of the barbarians were dualists; but as our author evidently found Basilides rather beyond his comprehension, he may have hastily concluded that he wished to maintain (*vult affirmare*) the opinions which he quoted. As Jacobi remarks, he would not have ascribed

¹⁶⁰ Jacobi, in supposing that the writer referred to the well-known Basilides, treats the statement that he was a preacher among the Persians as entirely unworthy of credit, and thinks that the author deemed an ancient heretic unworthy of exact study. L.c. pp. 493, 507.

¹⁶¹ Hær. XXIV. 6.

¹⁶² L.c. p. 498 sqq.

to the heresiarch a mere wish to maintain dualism if he had found explicit passages suited to his purpose.¹⁵⁸ On the whole, then, if we had no other evidence, we might think it right to accept provisionally the testimony of this writer; but when this testimony is found to be wanting in clearness and self-consistency, while it is opposed to our most trustworthy authorities, I think we must not hesitate to reject it.

The final argument of Stähelin is that some of the articles are so strange that they are most easily understood as the production of a man who was secretly mocking the whole Gnostic movement.¹⁵⁴ Under Basilides he refers to the doctrine that "Not-being God made a not-being world out of not-being things,"¹⁵⁵ and to the notion of "the great ignorance." No doubt the former doctrine sounds rather strange to modern ears; but it is the natural outcome of a tendency of thought prevalent at Alexandria, and marks the genuine and original thinker rather than the mocking forger. The absolute must be a simple unity, elevated above all predicates; for predicates imply comparison and differentiation. Philo tried to express this idea by calling God $\delta\ \acute{\omega}\nu$ or $\tau\acute{o}\ \acute{\omega}\nu$. But this was not sufficiently abstract for later thinkers. Plotinus maintained that the unit¹⁵⁶ transcended both reason and essence;¹⁵⁷ the former, because reason involves the distinction of thinker and thought; the latter, because being and reason are identical.¹⁵⁸ Basilides anticipated this lofty abstraction. He did not mean to deny what we should call the reality of God, but to indicate that he was such as creation could neither denote by speech nor contain in thought,¹⁵⁹ that he was incomprehensible,¹⁶⁰ that he was above all names,¹⁶¹ and beyond all thought and characterization.¹⁶² We must explain the "not-being world" in a similar way. It was incapable of predicates until the process of differentiation and multiplicity began. Similarly, "nothing" means none of the things that are named, or are apprehended by sensation or by thought.¹⁶³ This is a daring attempt to solve the profoundest of metaphysical prob-

¹⁵⁸ L.c. p. 507.

¹⁵⁴ p. 106.

¹⁵⁵ *Οὐκ ὦν θεὸς ἐποίησε κόσμον οὐκ ὄντα ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων.* p. 358, l. 6, 7.

¹⁵⁶ *Τὸ ἔν.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ἐπέκεινα νοῦ καὶ ἐπέκεινα οὐσίας.* As Mansel points out (Gnostic Heresies, p. 146 sq.), the latter statement is derived from Plato, *οὐκ οὐσίας ὄντος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, ἀλλ' ἔτι ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας πρῶτα καὶ δυνάμει ὑπερέχοντος* (Repub. VI. 19, p. 509 b).

¹⁵⁸ See Ueberweg's account of Plotinus.

¹⁶⁰ p. 370, l. 2.

¹⁵⁹ p. 360, l. 20.

¹⁶¹ p. 362, l. 81.

¹⁶² p. 364, l. 84. The last two statements refer immediately to his "place."

¹⁶³ p. 358, l. 91-93.

lems, and may or may not be satisfactory ; but it does not mark the jesting forger.

The doctrine of the great ignorance is one of singular originality. The whole process of creation is conceived as a struggling upwards of all things. This involves a continual groaning and travailing, till the revelation of the sons of God takes place. But when, through the emancipation of the third sonship, this is accomplished, God will stop the ceaseless pain and sighing by compassionately bringing on the Cosmos the great ignorance, in order that all things may remain according to nature, and nothing desire anything contrary to its nature, and that no soul may be tortured by desiring impossibilities, as though a fish were to desire to feed upon the mountains with sheep.¹⁶⁴ It is a curious thought, but one not without beauty and pity ; and this blessed ignorance is a fitting close to the process of evolution, when the restoration of all things will be accomplished, and every part of creation have reached its allotted goal.

We must add, in conclusion, that the case of Basilides is very different from that of the more obscure heretical sects. In their case some forged documents might be passed off upon Hippolytus, but Basilides was a well-known writer, and there could have been no serious difficulty in obtaining a copy of his works through the regular channels. He was the author of twenty-four books on "the Gospel,"¹⁶⁵ as we are informed by Eusebius on the authority of Agrippa Castor ;¹⁶⁶ and Clement, who apparently refers to this voluminous work under the title of *Exegetica*,¹⁶⁷ evidently considered its thoughts sufficiently weighty to deserve consideration. If Hippolytus seriously wished to know the principal contents of so important a composition, it is very unlikely that he would have placed himself in untrustworthy hands. This improbability is greatly increased by the fact that the account which he gives is not the result of first impressions, but is a departure as deliberate as it is complete, not only from the representations of his master Irenæus, but from those which he himself gave at an earlier period in his "Compendium," — if at least it is rightly supposed that that work is substantially preserved in the summary of Pseudo-Tertullian. What reasonable explanation can be given of so remarkable a change except that Hippolytus, having made himself acquainted with the writings of Basilides himself, discovered that the

¹⁶⁴ c. 27.

¹⁶⁵ Not "his" Gospel, as Stähelin says, putting "his" in inverted commas, p. 89.

¹⁶⁶ H. E. IV. 7.

¹⁶⁷ Strom. IV. 12, p. 599.

accounts of the system which were current in the west when he was a youth were totally incorrect ?¹⁶⁸

I am unable, then, to attach any serious force to the arguments by which the hypothesis of forgery is supported ; and on a survey of the whole case, I think the evidence renders it highly probable that the writer quoted by Hippolytus is Basilides himself.

¹⁶⁸ We may notice especially the use of *probolæ* by Pseudo-Tertullian, and the emphatic statement of Hippolytus that Basilides entirely rejected the ideas connected with this word.