

Last of the Gnostics

The End of the Cathars

Mary Magdalene's Gospel Revealed

By

Don Durrett

(Final Edit November 25, 2010)

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I know that God exists. I don't need to believe, I know. – Carl Jung

I think, therefore I am. No, I am aware that I think, therefore I AM. – Eckhart Tolle

The triumph of Catholicism was a spiritual and cultural disaster from which we are still recovering. – Timothy Freke & Peter Gandy

Fundamentalism is a Protestant continuation of the intolerance and dogmatic traditions of Catholicism. – Timothy Freke & Peter Gandy

The language of Angels is laughter. – Steve Rother

Readers' Reviews

I met Don Durrett when a friend brought him to my home for tea. My wife and I spent several hours listening intently as Don spun out a seemingly unlimited, integrated understanding of metaphysics. We were both astonished at the depth and breadth of his knowledge, the distilled clarity of his explanations, and his obvious sincere commitment to living and breathing his spirituality. Don is a master teacher.

I am a Gnostic—a one who knows or seeks to know God personally, rather than believe in others' accounts of Him. This was also the path of the Gnostic group the Cathars depicted in Don's book, *The Last of the Gnostics*. His book sheds historical light on the incredibly important, ongoing struggle between repressive religious orthodoxy and mysticism. *The Last of the Gnostics* returns us to a time when the Cathars fought a desperate battle with the all-powerful Catholic Church in an attempt to hold open the direct portal to God that Christ had opened to them—to all of us. Perhaps the most important message to be found in Don's book is his personal declaration that now is the time when we will once again embrace the ways of the Cathars, the Gnostic ways, and rediscover that long-hidden direct doorway to God that still stands open to each of us.

– Stephen C. Paul, Ph.D., author of *Illuminations*, *Inneractions*, *In Love*, and *Hollow Bones*.

Congratulations on writing a book that will edify so many people regarding the Gnostic philosophy and history of the Cathars. I found this book enlightening, educational and an extraordinary read.

– Orpheus Phylos, author of *Earth, the Cosmos, and You*.

Don,

I have read everything you have written, and loved them all. While reading about the Templar Knights to a friend, we were ushered into a higher realm for 27 minutes. Kat could not believe her eyes, or the things we were privileged to see.

I love the fact that you were "chosen" to write at this time, and I recognize that you have not written by yourself, but by the "Spirit of Truth." What a wonderful "Gift" the Spirit has given us, in you, Don Durrett.

It has been my wish to the Universe that Spirits like you would come to teach with Integrity the Truths without "Fear." Like a small child at Christmas, I have been anxiously waiting the opening of these "truths/writings" knowing that they are not just for the few, but for the "ALL." My prediction is that your writings will become the new way of life and that every person that intends to survive will need them. It will guide them on their Journey.

I place you in the company of Nostradamus, Cayce, Krishnamurti, and last but certainly not least, Christ Jesus, who is my favorite.

I have known The Spirit of Don Durrett for many lifetimes, as he and I are inseparable. We have chosen to help one another through all Eternity. We are on this Journey together and I want you "ALL" to know that he is "Second to None" ... the Spirit of Christ is within him, as he has Great Love for THE ALL.

I know that Don has willingly given up a great deal to write these truths. I do not believe that there are words on this planet to tell you, Don, how much I respect you and what you are doing for THE ALL. I will Honor and Love You for eternity, Love and Light to ALL.

In Spirit,
Ladyhawk

Acknowledgements

Initially, I thought I was writing alone. Then I came to the awareness that I have help. I don't consciously channel. It is much more subtle than that. All I know is the ideas popping into my head are only partly mine; many are coming from the "other side." Thus, I don't take sole credit for these words. I share this book with the Universe, who is my co-writer.

I must give credit to those who helped make this book possible. First, to my editor, Joanna Benz. She has provided me with the final touches that no writer can do without. I feel blessed to have found her. Next, to my close friend, Toni Harper, whom I have relied upon for proofreading, critique and support. Lastly, to my family, friends, and readers. Without their support, I might have given up.

Introduction

The early Gnostics, especially the Cathars, on whom this book is based, have always held a fascination for me. I've always considered their beliefs closer to Jesus' message than traditional Christianity. For this reason, I think that their historical existence is of substantial significance. Moreover, a careful look at their spirituality can provide insight into the recent proliferation of New Age spirituality, as well as the reason for the coming downfall of traditional Christianity.

Gnosticism is the pursuit of Gnosis. Gnosis, pronounced NO-SIS, is the direct knowing of God, or more specifically, the direct knowing that we are all *one* consciousness. A Gnostic can either have Gnosis, or be in pursuit thereof. (An agnostic is just the opposite: someone who believes that, although God may or may not exist, it is impossible to have true, firsthand knowledge of God.)

As you read this book, you will often find reference to the term “the *nous*.” I took this term from Mary Magdalene's Gospel, and it is being used to indicate our spiritual mind, which is also connected to the universal consciousness where we are all connected and all *One*.

There is a large body of historical material that shows that the original Gnostics believed in the interconnectedness of consciousness. The Gnostics were the first people in the West to spiritualize the concept of a direct connection—through our soul—to God. This was a significant development. It was the first step that has allowed us to evolve to the point where we are now ready—as a civilization—to recognize that God exists in everyone and everything.

The Gnostic message of being *directly* connected to God was denied by the Catholic Church, and acceptance of such a belief was labeled as heresy. The first members of the Catholic Church were content to hear the words of Jesus, and to accept

priests as their leaders and intermediaries to God.

Whereas the early Catholics denied their connection to God, they did acknowledge Jesus' direct link, which is documented by many scriptures, including "It is not I who perform these miracles, but the Father," and "Of these things I do you can do as well, and even greater." From these teachings, the Gnostics recognized that they, too, were directly linked to God, and so they felt no need for religious leaders and intermediaries.

Today, more and more people are finding spirituality on their own, using a direct connection with God. Most of these people have no idea that they are Gnostics and that their beliefs are affecting everyone. Gnosticism is changing civilization, as more and more people realize that we are all connected. There is a steadily growing awareness that all of humankind is *one*, a complete consciousness that is interconnected and interrelated. Humanity is starting to recognize that we all share the same source, the same consciousness. This is the very thing that the early Gnostics tried to instill.

The time for society to accept this revolutionary idea is drawing near. We are approaching a moment in history when humanity will acknowledge that God exists in all things, and that God *is* all things. For this reason, I am writing to honor the last organized Gnostics—the Cathars—who were murdered for their unwavering belief in Gnosis. Without their efforts, we may not have reached this opportunity. Their story needs to be told, and we need to remember their contribution.

* * * * *

This is my ninth book, although the first to be published. I wrote it in 2006. Here is a list of the previous eight and the year they were written:

A Stranger from the Past	1991
Enlightenment School	1992
The Secret	1993
New Thinking for the New Age: Part I	1994
The Spirit Club	1995

Conversations with an Immortal	1997
Countdown to Awareness	1998
New Thinking for the New Age: Part II	2003

It is my hope that all of these books will be published. All of them have a common theme—a vision of a future based on Gnostic beliefs. I have always told friends that I didn't want to be published until the world began to change. I often refer to this coming change as a shift, or a transition. For this reason I have not been in a hurry to publish. Now, as we near the end of this decade, I feel this shift is upon us.

Donald David Durrett

March 24, 2010

Author's Note

This is a historical novel, and the story was based on historical facts or, in some places, inspired by them. Every battle and the dates of the battles are true. Raymond VI, Raymond VII, Simon de Montfort, Arnaud Amaury, the Popes and the Kings of France mentioned, are all historical people. While there is no prophecy in Mary Magdalene's Gospel, all of the other references are fact, except the rules of love and living—I made those up.

Blanche of Laurac did own a castle in Laurac during the Albigensian Crusade, and she was known for her support of the Cathars. However, she did not have a daughter named Joanna. She actually became a Perfecti herself, after the crusade began, and died at Montségur. I gave her a pivotal role in this story to honor her courage. As a noblewoman, she gave up everything to become a Perfecti, knowing that it would, most likely, lead to her death.

The Cathars, and the feminine aspect of Christianity that they represented, need to be remembered and honored. I think that they embodied something that is very important, perhaps even the key to our future spirituality. They represented the purity of love, and how love binds us all together.

To have met a Cathar Perfecti in Languedoc, before the Albigensian Crusade began, was to meet someone who represented the epitome of love. They were the pure ones. The true descendants of Jesus. They were Christians who balanced the masculine and the feminine, treating both sexes equally—something that we are still striving to achieve today.

If the Catholic Church does fall—and I think there will be only two more Popes—it will most likely be replaced by a non-organizational form of Christian Gnosticism. Something very much like the individualized beliefs of the Cathars. People will find their

spirituality from within, and not through the dogma of any organized church.

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Today our culture focuses on economics, on money—and love is relegated to family and relationship issues. But I believe that what Jesus put in motion is about to culminate. His message that “Love is the only answer to the human existence” is about to be accepted. I’m not sure when this change will occur, but it will be during our lifetime.

Currently, as a civilization, we perceive ourselves to be separate from one another. For this reason, we have neglected Jesus’ message and have become an incredibly materialistic society. Soon we are going to begin recognizing our inherent connection and the fact that everything is interconnected. This will create the transformation of humanity and the culmination of Jesus’ mission.

Mary Magdalene and the Cathars are a link to the past and a history that we can use to make the “jump” in awareness. Anyone can read this book and “get it.” Hopefully, it helps people understand how Jesus’ message was misinterpreted by the early Catholics, and why Christianity went astray.

The Gnostics were literally burned at that stake, and Jesus’ true message went with them. From the time of the Cathars extinction until today, we have not had a true group of people who represented Jesus’ message. For this reason, I felt compelled to tell their story.

After years of thinking about the Gnostics, once I sat down to write about them, the entire story came to me. I am more passionate about this book than my others for this reason. It came from deep inside of me.

One of my motives for writing this book is that I believe that I am in some way connected to them in a previous lifetime. I feel that, in many ways, I am writing this to honor myself and the many thousands alive today who also have had past lives as Gnostics. Those lives were not spent in vain, and those contributions need to be honored.

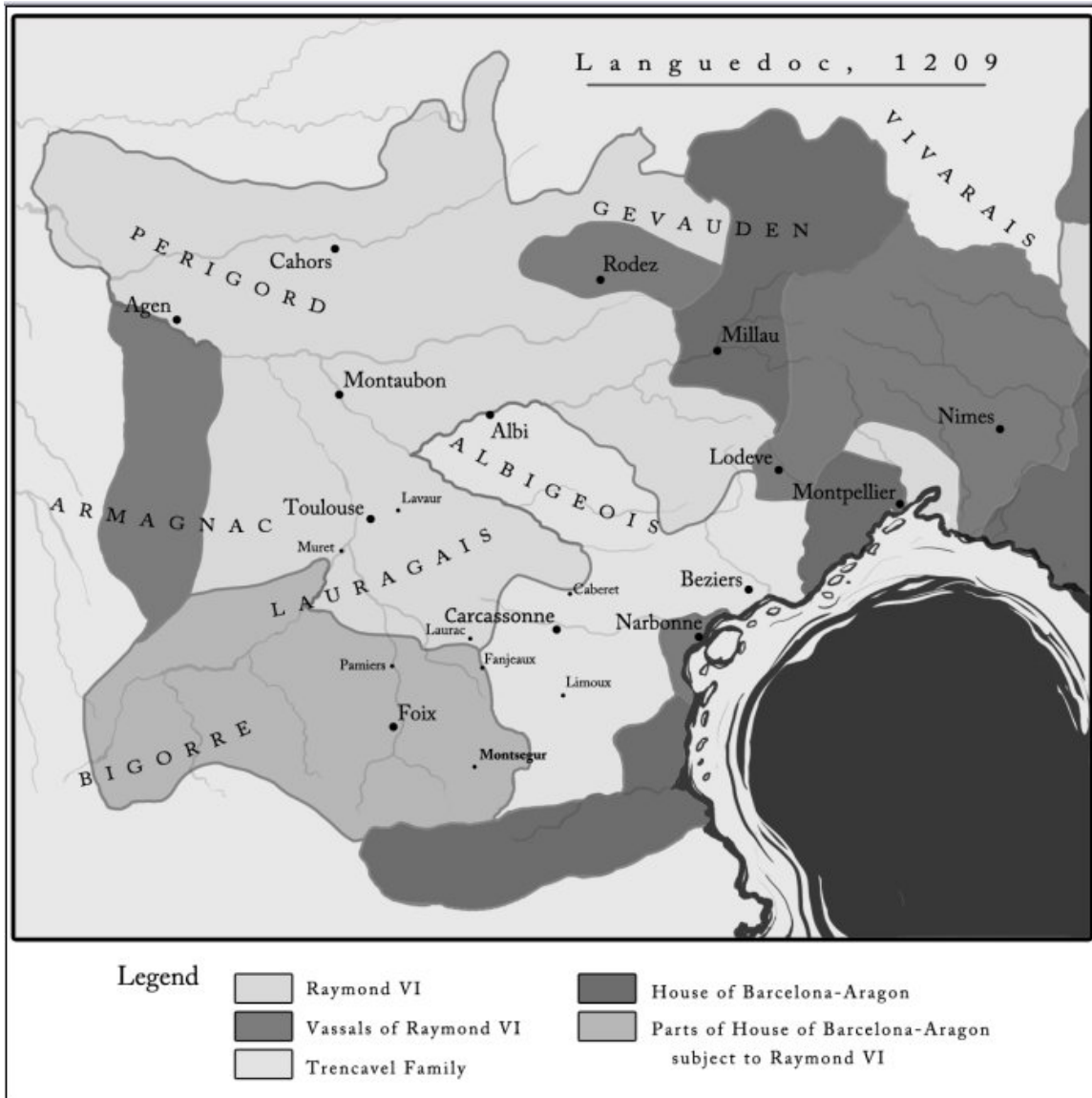
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I used the feminine as the basis for the plot. It begins with three women disciples: Mary Magdalene, Mariam, and Sarah traveling to France at Jesus' request to spread the true message. Then the story follows three more women: Margaret, Blanche, and Joanna. Intertwined with them is Mary Magdalene's Gospel. I did this on purpose. The feminine has been missing from Christianity, when in fact it was a focal point of Jesus' teaching—that we are all equal and *one*.

Today, the modern day Gnostics are mostly unknown women. For this reason, I did not give any of the girls—whom Joanna taught—names. They are nameless for a purpose—to show how anonymous New Age Gnostic women are today.

At the end of the book, when Montségur falls, I show Joanna and Blanche jumping into the fire. I purposely focus on their deaths to show that it has been women, much more so than men, who have borne the burden of Gnostic spirituality. (It is estimated that 9 million witches were burned, mainly by the Holy Inquisition.) I also show that their spirituality allowed Blanche and Joanna to be fearless. It will be fearless Gnostic women who lead the way in the future. Jesus was called the peacemaker, but it will be Gnostic women who show us how to create peace on earth.

Map of Languedoc, 1209



Chapter One: Mary Magdalene's Gospel

As Mary Magdalene walked down to Jesus' tomb, her grief was still apparent on her face. Her lover and husband lay dead after his brutal crucifixion. She was in intense emotional pain, and did not know how it could ever subside.

Suddenly, as she approached the tomb, Jesus appeared right in front of her, as if from nowhere, only a few feet away! She instantly felt their closeness again, and relief from her pain. Her eyes welled up with tears of happiness and she lunged forward to embrace him.

Jesus put up his hand to stop her, but spoke gently. "Stand back, Mary. I am in spirit now. You cannot feel me."

Her emotions were still raging. She was disappointed that she could not hug him, yet overjoyed to see him again.

"Have you been to the Kingdom yet?" she asked, with tears flooding down her cheeks.

He nodded, with a joyful grin. "Yes, it is so beautiful. Don't worry, we will be together again. You have nothing to fear."

"I miss you."

"I know, but you have to be strong. Now is the time for you to perform your mission."

Mary Magdalene looked puzzled. "What do you mean?"

"I need you to take our children to France, to live with the Essenes. It's no longer safe here. Have your father take you, and also bring Sarah and Mariam. The three of you are to spread my message in France. What you start will last for generations. Then it will die, but it will be reborn in the end times."

"And what about the Apostles?" she asked quizzically.

“They will be persecuted by the Romans, but they will succeed in starting a new church. A universal church that will spread and eventually become the Church of Rome.”

Mary suddenly became angry. “Why them? Why should they start a church? They don’t understand your message.”

“It is how it has to be, for now. In the end times, this church will eventually fall, to be replaced by yours. Your mission will lead to the correct outcome. People are not yet ready to recognize that we are all God. It will take generations, millennia. Your mission is to not let my message die.”

Now Mary looked almost afraid. “How can we do this? It is such a burden.”

Jesus grinned. “The Essenes will help. I need you to tell the people of Languedoc the good news. Write a gospel and share it with the people. Trust me, in the end times, it will have a much larger impact than Peter’s Church of Rome. It will impact the entire world. His church will fall and yours will rise.”

Mary was crying again, but she was also feeling consoled and joyous. “You want me to teach about the *nous*?”

He nodded. “Yes! Teach the Essene Perfecti in Languedoc. They will help you spread the message. Tell them that I sent you.”

Jesus’ spirit body began to slowly dissolve into the ethers.

“Don’t go! Will I see you again?”

She waited for his reply, but the visitation had ended. Once more, she felt her terrible loss. Then she fell to her knees in desperation and cried.

* * * * *

Mary made the thirty-mile journey to the Essene community at Mount Carmel, northwest of Jerusalem on the Mediterranean coast. Her meeting with Jesus had consoled her, and the intensity of her grieving had somewhat diminished. She gathered her strength, knowing that she must lead the others to France. She was Joseph of Arimathea’s daughter and the strongest of the women disciples.¹

Walking through the gates, the first person she saw was Anna, Jesus’

¹ *Anna, Grandmother of Jesus*, Claire Heartsong, S.E.E. Publishing, 2002, p. 128.

grandmother, one of the spiritual leaders of the community. She walked to Anna, who was on her hands and knees, tending to the garden.

“I just saw Jesus! He spoke to me!”

Anna looked up at Mary in her normal serious gaze. “Did he give you a message?”

Mary nodded.

“Let’s go inside and talk.” Anna rose and dusted off her clothes.

Mary smiled. “I’ll go get Sarah and Mariam and meet you in your room.”

The four most important women in Jesus’ life all sat comfortably in Anna’s room. This was where Jesus had spent many hours talking with his grandmother about the ways of God.

Mary Magdalene looked at Sarah and Mariam. “I saw Jesus this morning, near his tomb, and he gave me a message!”

Sarah and Mariam stared at her with wide-eyed, shocked expressions, waiting for Mary to continue.

“He said that we have to go to France, to Sarah’s home, with the Essenes. He said for us to teach the Perfecti what we know, and have them help us spread his message.”

“Why not here?” Mariam asked thoughtfully.

“He said this is how it has to be, because people here are not ready to recognize their divinity. We are to spread the message in France, and Peter and the Apostles are to spread it here.”

“Most of the Apostles are feeble minded,” Sarah said. “What message can they spread?”

“Now, we don’t need to call them names,” Anna said. “These are the men that Jesus selected to be his Apostles. They have a role to play.”

“I’m sorry,” Sarah said.

Anna looked at Mary. “Anything else?”

“Yes. He said that Peter and the Apostles would be persecuted, but would still create a church. Peter’s church is going to become the Church of Rome. It will eventually fall because it will not include his true message.”

“And what happens to the message that we deliver in France?” Sarah asked.

“It will have an impact for generations, and then will die at the hands of the Church of Rome. However,” Mary grinned, “it will be reborn in the end times, and will replace Peter’s Church, impacting the entire world.”

“The end times? When are the end times?” Mariam asked.

“Jesus said millennia from now,” Mary replied. “That means at least a thousand years.”

“Let me see if I understand,” Sarah replied. “The three of us are going to create a new religion that is going to die and then one day be reborn and become the world’s religion?”

Mary nodded.

There was silence. Everyone deferred to Anna to ask the next question. Anna stared at Mary, contemplating what needed to be done.

“Okay, Jesus wants the three of you to make sure that his true message is not lost. You’re the only three who understand it and can travel to France. Joseph will take you in one of his boats. There is no time to waste. You must leave as soon as Joseph can make the arrangements.”

Anna looked at Mary. “Tomorrow you need to tell the Apostles that you saw Jesus. This is of huge historical importance. Do not tell them what he said or where you are going. There could be danger to your travel plans, so it will be better if we are discreet.”

Mary, Sarah, and Mariam all nodded in agreement.

“Did you tell your children yet?” Anna asked Mary.

“No, I left them with Martha. I will tell them when we get back.”

Anna nodded.

They continued to discuss the details of their trip as the night progressed, and also talked about which of the Essene disciples would travel with them.

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The next day, Mary, Sarah, and Mariam walked to the Apostle John’s house in

Jerusalem. All three were first cousins and granddaughters of Anna.² Of Anna's children, Joseph of Arimathea was the oldest, and Mother Mary was the youngest.³ Mary Magdalene was the daughter of Joseph of Arimathea; Sarah, the daughter of Isaac; and Mariam, the daughter of Rebekah.⁴

The three granddaughters were the closest people to Jesus, although Anna was one of Jesus' teachers and he was very close to her, as well. Amazingly, all three girls were born in the same year as Jesus.⁵ Not only were they Jesus' first cousins; they were highly evolved souls and spiritual adepts. They could converse with Jesus on a level that was beyond that of the Apostles, or nearly anyone of that era. In many respects, they were Jesus' spiritual equals.

As they approached John's house, Mary knocked on the door and Phillip answered, smiling. "Come in! We've been looking for you."

Phillip was one of the few Apostles who respected Mary and deferred to her understanding of Jesus' message.

"Why?" Mary asked, walking into the house, with Sarah and Mariam following.

"Peter, John, and James saw Jesus yesterday near the tomb. He told them that he saw you first."

Nine of the twelve original Apostles were present. Thaddaeus and Matthias had left Jerusalem, fearful of persecution. The twelfth, Judas, had hanged himself after the crucifixion.

Peter was the leader of the Apostles and had always been antagonistic towards the women. They did not like to be in his company. In fact, they wouldn't have come today if it could have been avoided.

As usual, Peter was confrontational. "What did Jesus tell you?" Peter asked Mary accusingly, as the three women were seated.

"Only that I had nothing to fear, and that we would be together again in God's Kingdom."

"We want to hear more," Peter replied sternly. "Not about what he said yesterday,

² Ibid, p. 128.

³ Ibid., p. 66, 94.

⁴ Ibid., p. 128.

⁵ Ibid., p. 128.

but about what he told you in secret. We know that he told you things that he kept from us. You are like him. You understood his ways.”

Mary was quite surprised. In the past, they had never shown any willingness or wanted to talk about the inner mysteries. Several of them had even commented that it was sorcery.

“If that is what you want, then I can tell you,” Mary said softly.

All of the Apostles nodded in agreement: Peter, Simon, John, James (John’s brother), Phillip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew and James.

“Before I begin, I would like to know what Jesus told you at the tomb.”

“He told us to spread his message.” Peter replied. “To take his place and to spread the good news of God’s Kingdom. He said that it is our duty as Apostles.”

Sarah rolled her eyes, but didn’t say what was on her mind.

Mary nodded. “All right then. I will tell you what he told me about our demons.” She paused for a moment before continuing, to make sure that they really wanted to hear this.

“The first demon is darkness. Without a connection to the Holy Spirit—the *nous*—we live in darkness. With a connection to the *nous*, light enters our soul. The stronger this connection becomes, the more light that we shine. We become light beings, and our spirit shines brightly. For those with eyes to see, this light is magnificent.”

“This is utter nonsense!” Peter exclaimed. “Why would the Lord say such things? I have never heard anything like this before.”

“I, for one, don’t believe he said it,” Andrew added.

“Nor do I,” Simon quickly interjected in a loud voice.

“Calm down,” John said. “These are the teachings of the Essenes. Are not most of Jesus’ family Essenes? Was not Jesus taught at Qumran and Mount Carmel? Does he not visit there often? Maybe he just never taught us the ways of the Essenes.”

There was confused silence and resentful tension in the room. Peter, Andrew, and Simon really did not want to listen to the *women*. But the other Apostles were not as antagonistic.

“Was not Mary the closest to Jesus?” Phillip implored. “Did he not speak to her the most? If anyone knows him, it is her. Let her finish, and then we can discuss this

matter among ourselves. We did agree to hear what she had to say.”

Stony silence prevailed, but Phillip nodded for Mary to continue, so she went on.

“The second demon is craving. Here we do not recognize our soul, so we crave a connection with God. We feel alone, abandoned and neglected—when in fact, God is always with us. Our craving is misguided. The illusion of separation from God is false. We are not separate from God, but intricately connected.”

Peter scanned the other Apostles, wanting to stop her from lecturing them. His eyes held anger and a complete lack of understanding about what she was talking about. But somehow he remained silent, and allowed her to continue.

“The third demon is ignorance. Here the ego, thinking it is real, creates mischief. The ego, being ignorant, does not know that the soul is available for guidance. Ignoring the soul, the ego uses experience and memories to find its way in life. The ego is limited to past experience for its decisions. These thoughts from the ego lead one astray. The ego is the mischief-maker, the beginning of all misery. Only a quiet mind—and a connection to the *nous*—can lead one to peace.

“The fourth demon is jealousy. Here we are jealous of God. Overcoming ignorance, we have found the soul. However, we have also found that our identity is threatened. We have discovered that the “me” of the ego does not really exist! All that exists is God—one consciousness that we all share. To overcome this jealousy, we have to give up our illusion of personal identity and become one with God.

“The fifth demon is enslavement to the body. As our jealousy begins to fade, the body continues to seek pleasure. This can be the simple fact of feeling alive, to the more habitual practices of eating, drinking, and sexuality. Feeling and thinking that we are the body must be replaced by the recognition that we are the soul, that we are literally consciousness itself. Then we can begin to feed the soul and not the body.

“The sixth demon is intoxicated wisdom. After we have battled with the preceding five demons, we have achieved a level of spiritual wisdom that is beyond what we have previously obtained. Now we have Gnosis—knowledge of God. This leads us to ignore God and instead play God. We voice our knowledge to the masses, exclaiming our virtue and wisdom. We feel spiritual. We feel god-like. In time, this is overcome, as we recognize our folly and submit to the true will of God.

“The last demon is guileful wisdom. Here we are near enlightenment. We are spiritual beings by this point, with Gnosis, and at the edge of melding with God. But we don’t want to let our individuality go quite yet. We don’t want to be completely consumed by God. Our ego has one last splurge of individuality. We use our guileful wisdom to keep God at bay, refusing to surrender to the inevitable. Here we are quiet, making our final preparations for enlightenment.”

Mary stopped and glanced at the Apostles. “That’s it.”

“What exactly does all that mean?” Matthew asked, completely confused.

Mary answered quickly. “It takes lifetimes, but, in time, we overcome these demons and find our connection with God. In the end, we become enlightened—one with God. That is what Jesus attained, and it is our ultimate goal as well. Life is a spiritual journey to find God by overcoming our demons.”

“Mary,” Phillip asked, “the Lord said that he cast out all seven of your demons. Does that mean that you are also enlightened?”

Mary grinned. “Jesus is enlightened. I am still on my journey.”

“That is blasphemy,” Peter interjected. “I’ve heard enough. These are not the words of our Lord.”

“Would you like to hear his actual words?” Mary asked. “His explanation of enlightenment?”

“Hrrmp,” Peter muttered.

“Of course, we would love to hear it,” Phillip said.

Mary nodded. “That which oppressed me has been slain; that which encircled me has vanished; my craving has faded; I am freed from my ignorance. I left the world with the aid of another world. Henceforth, I travel toward Repose, where time rests in the Eternity of Time; I go now into Silence.”⁶

“What does that mean?” Phillip asked, suddenly bewildered.

Mary answered quickly. “It discusses how the demons have been slain using the connection to the *nous*. The *nous* is the connector between this world and the world of the Kingdom. The *nous* is the stillness of our consciousness—it is the silence. We are not the

⁶ *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, Jean-Yves Leloup, Inner Traditions, 2002, p. 16-17.

voice in our head, but the *awareness* of that voice. That awareness is our soul, which is the *nous*. The *nous* is where God is found.

“Once this connection has been established, time stands still. It is silence of the mind that opens this connection. The quiet mind keeps the mischief maker—the ego—at bay. It allows purity and innocence and love to blossom. It is the goal of all. It is the outcome that we all seek. And it is found through the *nous*, which is our soul’s connection to God.”

“That is beautiful,” Thomas said.

Mary smiled.

But the other Apostles were not convinced. “I don’t understand a word of it,” Andrew said.

“It is simply nonsense,” Peter reiterated.

Mary rose. “I’m sorry, but we have to leave now. My children are waiting across town. I want to get there before dark.”

The Apostles rose and nodded their goodbyes. Phillip was the only one smiling as Mary, Sarah, and Mariam left. It had been an uncomfortable discussion, but one that needed to take place. The chasm between the Gnostics and the Catholics was now established.

As they walked away, Sarah said, “I’m glad we don’t have to see them again. They wouldn’t know the *nous* if it hit them over the head.”

They all laughed.

“Phillip, Thomas, and John understand,” Mariam said. “I’ve discussed it with them several times. I wish we could take them with us.”

“No, they can’t come,” Mary replied. “Jesus was very specific. The Apostles are to remain here to help Peter establish his church.”

* * * * *

A few days later, they made the short journey from Mount Carmel to the Mediterranean port where Joseph’s boat awaited. There were many who were moving to France. Of course, there was Mary Magdalene, along with her children, including Sarah

their first child.

Mariam and Sarah were travelling with their disciple husbands, Nathan and Philip, while Jesus' grandmother, Anna, and Mother Mary came with children Ruth, John, Esther and Matteas. Joseph of Arimathea accompanied his grown daughters Lois and Martha and their husbands Daniel and Lazarus. Myriam of Tyana and her three children Joses, Miriam and Johannes also were making the trek.⁷

After some deliberation, Joseph of Arimathea had decided to go along on the journey. He was getting old and realized that he might not see his daughters again. Also, he knew that this was a traumatic voyage for them, and he wanted them to feel safe. His presence gave everyone a sense of comfort. He was the wise man of the family, the patriarch. He was the one man to whom even Jesus deferred. In fact, his wealth and prestige were of such significance that nearly everyone in Jerusalem knew of him.

⁷ *Anna, The Voice of the Magdalenes*, Claire Heartsong, S.E.E. Publishing, 2010, p 367.