

The Apostle Paul

A FEW OF H. P. BLAVATSKY'S STATEMENTS ABOUT HIM

FROM "ISIS UNVEILED"



“There was but one apostle of Jesus worthy of that name, and that was Paul. However **disfigured were his *Epistles* by dogmatic hands before being admitted into the Canon**, his conception of the great and divine figure of the philosopher who died for his idea can still be traced in his addresses to the various Gentile nations.” (Vol. 2, p. 241)

“The erudite author of *Supernatural Religion* [i.e. a book anonymously published in 1874] assiduously endeavors to prove that by *Simon Magus* we must understand the apostle Paul, whose *Epistles* were secretly as well as openly calumniated by Peter . . . The Apostle of the Gentiles [i.e. Paul] was brave, outspoken, sincere, and very learned; the Apostle of Circumcision [i.e. Peter], cowardly, cautious, *insincere*, and very ignorant. That **Paul had been, partially, at least, if not completely, initiated into the theurgic mysteries**, admits of little doubt. His language, the phraseology so peculiar to the Greek philosophers, certain expressions used but by the initiates, are so many sure ear-marks to that supposition. . . . In his *Epistles to the Corinthians* he [i.e. Professor Alexander Wilder, early Theosophist and Platonist] shows Paul abounding with "expressions suggested by the initiations of Sabazius and Eleusis, and the lectures of the (Greek) philosophers. He (Paul) designates himself an idiotēs – a person unskilful in the Word, but not in the *gnosis* or philosophical learning. 'We speak wisdom among the perfect or initiated,' he writes; 'not the wisdom of this world, nor of the archons of this world, but divine wisdom in a mystery, secret – which *none of the Archons of this world knew*.' ”

“What else can the apostle mean by these unequivocal words, but that he himself, as belonging to the *mystæ* (initiated), spoke of things shown and explained only in the Mysteries? The "divine wisdom in a mystery which none of the *archons of this world knew*," has evidently some direct reference to the *basileus* of the Eleusinian initiation who *did know*. . . . Another proof that Paul belonged to the circle of the "Initiates" lies in the following fact. The apostle had his head shorn at Cenchrea (where Lucius, *Apuleius*, was initiated) because "he had a vow." [Acts 18:18] The *nazars* – or set apart – as we see in the Jewish Scriptures, had to cut their hair which they wore long, and

which "no razor touched" at any other time, and sacrifice it on the altar of initiation. And the nazars were a class of Chaldean theurgists. We will show further that Jesus belonged to this class.

"Paul declares that: "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise *master-builder*, I have laid the foundation." [1 Corinthians 3:10] This expression, master-builder, used only *once* in the whole Bible, and by Paul, may be considered as a whole revelation. In the Mysteries, the third part of the sacred rites was called ***Epopteia*, or revelation, reception into the secrets**. In substance it means that stage of divine clairvoyance when everything pertaining to this earth disappears, and earthly sight is paralyzed, and the soul is united free and pure with its Spirit, or God. But the real significance of the word is "overseeing," from *optomai* – *I see myself*. In Sanscrit the word *evâpto* has the same meaning, as well as *to obtain*. . . . The title of master-mason, in Freemasonry, is derived from this, in the sense used in the Mysteries. Therefore, **when Paul entitles himself a "master-builder," he is using a word pre-eminently kabalistic, theurgic, and masonic, and one which no other apostle uses. He thus declares himself an adept, having the right to initiate others.**" (Vol. 2, p. 89-91)

"The narrative of the Apostle Paul, in his second *Epistle to the Corinthians* (xii. 3, 4), has struck several scholars, well versed in the descriptions of the mystical rites of the initiation given by some classics, as alluding most undoubtedly to the final ***Epopteia***. "I knew a certain man – *whether in body or outside of body*, I know not: God knoweth – who was rapt into Paradise, and heard things ineffable, *which it is not lawful for a man to repeat*." These words have rarely, so far as we know, been regarded by commentators as an allusion to the beatific visions of an "initiated" seer. But the phraseology is unequivocal. These things "*which it is not lawful to repeat*," are hinted at in the same words, and the reason for it assigned, is the same as that which we find repeatedly expressed by Plato, Proclus, Iamblichus, Herodotus, and other classics. "We speak WISDOM only among them who are PERFECT," says Paul; the plain and undeniable translation of the sentence being: "We speak of the profounder (or final) esoteric doctrines of the Mysteries (which were denominated *wisdom*) only among them who are initiated." So in relation to the "man who was rapt into Paradise" – and who was evidently Paul himself – the Christian word Paradise having replaced that of Elysium." (Vol. 2, p. 146)

"Paul, writing to the Corinthians, declared that the entire story of Moses and the Israelites was typical; [First Epistle to the Corinthians, x. 11.: "All these things happened unto them for *types*."] and in his *Epistle to the Galatians*, asserted that the whole story of Abraham, his two wives, and their sons was an allegory. [Epistle to the Galatians, iv. 24: "It is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a freewoman . . . which things are an allegory."]" (Vol. 2, p. 493)

"Take Paul, read **the little of original that is left of him in the writings attributed to this brave, honest, sincere man, and see whether any one can find a word therein to show that Paul meant by the word Christ anything more than the abstract ideal of the personal divinity indwelling in man**. For Paul, **Christ is not a person**, but an embodied idea. "If any man is in Christ he is a new creation," *he is reborn*, as after initiation, for the Lord is spirit – the spirit of man. **Paul was the only one of the apostles who had understood the secret ideas underlying the teachings of Jesus, although he had never met him**. But Paul had been initiated himself; and, **bent upon inaugurating a new and broad reform, one embracing the whole of humanity, he sincerely set his own doctrines far above the wisdom of the ages, above the ancient Mysteries and final revelation to the epoptæ**. As Professor A. Wilder well proves . . . , *it was not Jesus, but Paul who was the real founder of Christianity.*" (Vol. 2, p. 574)

FROM “THE SECRET DOCTRINE”

“Alone, among the Apostles of the Western religion, Paul seems to have fathomed – if not actually revealed – the archaic mystery of the Cross.” (Vol. 2, p. 556)

“St. Paul was an Initiate, and his words have quite a different meaning when read esoterically.” (Vol. 2, p. 513)

FROM “THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS” ARTICLE

“Paul was a Gnostic himself, *i.e.*, a “Son of Wisdom,” and **an Initiate into the true *mysteria* of *Christos***, though he may have thundered (or was made to appear to do so) against some Gnostic sects, of which, in his day, there were many. But **his *Christos* was not Jesus of Nazareth, nor any living man**, as shown so ably in Mr. Gerald Massey’s lecture, “Paul, the Gnostic Opponent of Peter.” He was an Initiate, a true “Master-Builder” or adept, as described in “Isis Unveiled,” Vol. II., pp. 90-91.”

“Their successors [i.e. later successors of the early Christians] have all been made to fall into the mistakes of the “foolish Galatians” reproved by Paul, who, as he tells them (Galat. iii. 1-5), having begun (by believing) in the Spirit (of *Christos*), “ended by believing in *the flesh*,” – i.e., a *corporeal* Christ. . . . That **Paul was a gnostic, a founder of a new sect of *gnosis* which recognized, as all other gnostic sects did, a “Christ-Spirit,” though it went against its opponents, the rival sects**, is sufficiently clear to all but dogmatists and theologians. Nor is it less clear that the primitive teachings of Jesus, whenever he may have lived, could be discovered only in Gnostic teachings; . . .”

“. . . Paul was undeniably – an INITIATE.”



Modern photograph of the road to Damascus.