

2. Judaic interests in Iranian religion (2nd-1st centuries B.C.)
  - A'. Dualism: an antagonist to God.
  - B'. Angelic hierarchy.
  - C'. Belief in rewards and punishments at Last Judgment.
    - I'. Israelite concept of the Day of the Lord.
- b. Proto-Gnostic influences. 280-286
  1. Hermeticism and Mandaeanism prove to be post-Christian.
  2. The Lesser Sophia or Wisdom of Canaanite origin.
    - A'. Emanation from God before creation.
    - B'. Descended into depths, raised from depths by God.
  3. The Logos concept.
    - A'. The divine voice in Orient in 3rd millennium.
    - B'. "The Word" (mêmrâ) substituted for name of God in the Targums.
- c. Other pagan influences. 286-292
  1. Pagan deities in other dress accepted by heretical Jews.
  2. The eschatologists, ecstatic visionaries of the future.
    - A'. The monastic, communistic Essenes probably derive from Mesopotamia.
      - I'. Lustration (baptism) rather than sacrifice.
      - II'. Interest in astrology and divination.
      - III'. John the Baptist probably an Essene.
  3. Messianism old Oriental concept.
    - A'. "Son of Man" appears in Iranian and cuneiform as savior of mankind.
- C. The documentary sources on Jesus. 292-297
  - I. Standpoint of older scholarship.
    - a. Mark and source Q basic, before 70 A.D.
    - b. Matthew and Luke 70-90.
    - c. John independent, 90-120.
  - II. Formgeschichte method.
    - a. Literary form the criterion, controlled by Sitz im Leben.
    - b. Uncovers material probably original, but
    - c. Often argues in a circle.
  - III. Torrey's view that most of gospels written before 70 and translated from Aramaic into Greek.
    - a. May be correct in general terms, but
    - b. Too absolute: no strictly comparable Aramaic or Greek available for comparison;
    - c. Neglects factor of oral transmission.
  - IV. Reliability of sources. 297-300
    - a. Sayings of Jesus transmitted by oral transmission for very brief time.
    - b. Contrast with apocryphal logia shows purity of accepted material.
    - c. John later than synoptic, but still 1st century, close to time of Jesus.
      1. Differs from synoptics psychologically: mystic side of Jesus.
      2. All exceptional elements in John have pre-Christian antecedents.
  - V. "What we have in [the Gospels is] a reflection of reports of eye-witnesses who were overwhelmed by the profound experiences ... through which they had passed. ... Here the historian has no right to deny what he cannot disprove. ... In the presence of authentic mysteries his duty is to stop and not attempt to cross the threshold into a world where he has no citizenship".
- D. The religion of Jesus comes directly out of the Judaic-Hellenic scene of his day. 300-304
  - I. Agreement and disagreement with Pharisees.