

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ  
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

YEAR B - SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

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According to Gnostic doctrine (at least Valentinian doctrine, and a doctrine to which we generally subscribe), when the pneumatic Jesus descended from the Pleroma he had to put on a psychic vestment, which was the psychic Christ, son of the Demiurge, before he could descend fully into the world of matter. This was so that the psychic church, the church of the law and the prophets, could be reconciled with the pneumatic or Preexistent Church. With this in mind, let us look at our readings for the day, beginning with the Gospel and working our way backward.

Here, John tells us, "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." These statements are significant in showing that Moses was not a prophet of the true God, but of the Demiurge. How do we know this? We need only look at the juxtaposition of these phrases. We are told that the "law" came through Moses. But then we are immediately reminded that "grace and truth" came through Jesus, as if to illustrate that the law embodies neither of these. And to emphasize this point, John tells us next that "No one has ever seen God." He tells us that only Christ has made the Father known to us. In other words, Moses neither knew God nor made Him known to us. But what I'd like to focus on here are the terms "grace" and "truth." These are not arbitrarily chosen virtues. They are technical terms having a very specific meaning concerning the psychic and pneumatic natures of Jesus Christ and His mission; the mission of reconciliation.

Grace refers to the atonement that comes from Christ's sacrifice that fulfills the law and establishes a new covenant. Truth is that pneumatic salvation that is attained by the light of gnostic revelation. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians - our Second Reading - elaborates on this. He says, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of trespasses according to the wealth of his grace which he lavished upon us." This sacrificial grace, then, is the atonement for our shortcomings according to the Demiurgic law of Moses. A little further into our reading Paul continues, "In him you also, having heard the message of truth...were sealed with the Holy Spirit." Here we see the mechanism of our pneumatic salvation. Just as Grace ensures our liberation from the law, his Truth, in sealing us with the Holy Spirit, is the means for our salvation: regeneration and reintegration. Grace and Truth therefore are Jesus Christ's fulfillment of the law and prophecy, as well as his facilitation of the reintegration of the Preexistent Church.

Let us now turn to our First Reading from the Apocryphon of James. Our Epistle and Gospel addressed both the psychic and pneumatic aspects of Christ. This reading, as we might expect, is concerned mainly with the pneumatic. Here we are told that "the head of prophecy was cut off with John." We can take this to mean that John was the last to announce the coming of the Light into the world. Since the coming of Jesus we have the means to access the Light itself, rather than to rely upon the prophecy of others. And what of those seeking prophecy? Once we have experienced a primary revelation, we may be able to prophesy ourselves. But it is better to instruct others in the way of Truth, that they may attain to the Light themselves rather than vicariously, through a secondary revelation. Jesus tells us here not to rely on prophecy, but to "acquire the Kingdom of Heaven for yourselves." he then continues, "Unless you acquire it through gnosis, you will not be able to find it." Our readings for the day therefore sum up the entire message and mission of Christ, which is at once sacramental and revelatory, exhorting us to participate wholly in each.