

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ  
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros  
to the Parish of St. Ambelain  
on Monday, March 21, 2016*

YEAR C - MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

O God, make speed to save me; O Lord, make haste to help me. Hello, and welcome everyone. It is now Monday of Holy Week, and we march rapidly with our Lord towards his death on the Cross and his glorious Resurrection. We will be meeting together every day until that blessed event.

You will have noticed that we have begun today, in our first reading, a study of the Trimorphic Protennoia, also called Three forms of First Thought. This treatise is one of the oldest and one of the most interesting of the works of the so-called Sethian Gnostics, or Barbeloites. Now, this is hardly the place or time for an in-depth analysis of this work. That would be better accomplished on your own, using the various commentaries on the text as a general guide and springboard for further exploration. But this highly mystical work is also excellent material for the practice of lectio divina, the techniques for which can be found in the excellent little book, *Conversations with God in Scripture* by Stephen J. Binz, and which is also addressed from a more specifically Gnostic perspective in *Syzygy* by Tau Palamas.

Let us take a look, though, at some of the images found in this passage. We notice right off that Protennoia, or First Thought, is a decidedly feminine principle or essence. A little while back we discussed the veneration of the Virgin Mary among the "orthodoxy" as one of the only means available to them to worship the feminine aspect of Divinity. And while we certainly have no problem with the veneration of this most holy Saint, who is the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we find in Barbelo the true Queen of the Aeons, the actual Mother of God, in the purest, most basic and archetypal sense.

From context and description, we can be sure that Protennoia - First Thought - is the same as what we find in the Apocryphon of John as Pronoia, or Forethought. Likewise, when we read here of Epinoia, or Afterthought, we have every confidence that this refers to Sophia - most especially in her form of Zoe, or Sophia Zoe. For we read here "I am the life of my Epinoia..." We see further that this First Thought, this Holy Spirit, is the very Spirit of Life itself, filling all, pervading all, enlightening and vivifying all.

She says a little further on, "I am laden with the voice," and, "I am the real voice." This agrees with what we have often claimed that She is the Voice of Thunder, the one who says, "This is my Son, with whom I am well pleased." And being the Voice, She is unmistakable as the Source of the Living Word, the Logos himself, who is all gnosis. For She says, "Through me comes gnosis." She is the First Thought of the Father, and through Her his Will is made manifest.

In our Gospel reading today we see a reflection of the Holy Spirit, Barbelo, in the person of Mary, Lazarus' sister, who anoints the feet of Jesus. Christos means anointed. And we call Jesus the Christ because he was anointed by the Holy Spirit. Now here, in the Gospel of John, we see one of the Marys anointing Jesus. This is not merely an interesting coincidence. It is an example of what is known as typology. That is, Mary anointing the feet of Jesus is a "type" of the greater anointing by the Holy Spirit. And we do not believe this to be merely a useful literary convention, but the depiction of a very important ritual anointing that was just as crucial to Jesus' earthly mission as the Spiritual anointing received previously. In preparing his body for death, he is preparing it for life. He is preparing us for life. Contemplate this during the week, and pray to the Holy Spirit and to St. Mary for their special blessings, and to Holy Sophia to reveal her gnosis.