

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Wednesday, March 23, 2016*

YEAR C - WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

O God make speed to save me; O Lord make haste to help me. Hello again, by brethren, on this Wednesday of Holy Week. Let us take a moment once again to remember the victims of yesterday's attacks in Belgium, and to remember those affected.

Our first reading from Trimorphic Protennoia is probably best studied in conjunction with the Apocryphon of John, as it deals with events described in the latter. The present work seems, in some ways, to be a commentary on the other, or at least supposing an intimate familiarity with the mythology & aeonology of the Apocryphon of John. We therefore leave it to you to explore this in greater depth on your own.

Our Gosple reading today is most interesting, as it deals with Jesus' foreknowledge of Judas' betrayal. The mystery of Judas' betrayal is a complex matter. There are at least two or three different ways of looking at this event. The first, and most common view is that Judas was always something of a shady character, caring more for his own selfish interests than those of Jesus, the other disciples, or the people to whom they preached. We saw some scriptural evidence of this in Monday's reading where he becomes upset at Mary's use of the expensive spikenard ointment. We are told there that he was upset not because of a concern for the poor, but rather because he himself was planning to steal the proceeds from its sale.

But let us suppose for a moment that John's recounting of this event was true insofar as being an accurate account of the words exchanged, but that the additional commentary was clouded by what occurred after the fact. We cannot discount this, because all the Gospels tend to disagree over various points concerning Judas Iscariot. It is therefore possible that Judas was merely a pragmatist. And it has even been posited that his betrayal of Jesus was merely intended to dampen some of the more "extreme" elements of the movement, in an attempt to actually save the movement as a whole, but that events spun wildly out of control.

A third view is that Jesus' betrayal by Judas was actually planned and commanded by Jesus, since these things would have to occur in order to fulfill his mission. In this latter case, Judas would be seen as having served Jesus in a way that perhaps no other apostle would have been willing, and making one of the greatest sacrifices of all - going down in history as the one who gave our Lord over to death. But we must not forget that this death was absolutely crucial to Christ's mission, and that his betrayal had to have been ordained from the start - whether or not Judas was aware of his role.

Now, in our scene from this passage in John, we see Jesus indicating the betrayer by giving him the bread. This is especially interesting when we consider the sharing of the bread & wine in the context of the Eucharistic supper. In the Eucharist, the bread is life-giving and beatifying. It is the source of all holiness and goodness. But we read here of Judas that, "after he received the bread, Satan entered into him." What we have here is essentially an anti-Eucahrist. That is, how could Satan enter into that which is filled with life, light and holiness? The effect of the bread seems to precisely the opposite effect of the Eucahristic bread. It would seem to have the effect of stripping all light & holiness from Judas, that he would be able to receive the spirit of Satan in order to perform his deed. This is not really a pleasant thought, but it is nevertheless an aspect of our scriptural teachings that merits thoughtful contemplation.