

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ  
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros  
to the Parish of St. Ambelain  
on Sunday, December 11, 2016*

YEAR A - THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Greetings brothers! Today is the third Sunday in the Advent Season. Christmas - the celebration of the advent of Christ into this world in the flesh - is coming soon. This holiday, and this liturgical season is emblematic of the advent of Christ-consciousness within the individual. It is representative of the expectation of the dawning of that deep, inner, transformative awareness, as well as external signs and manifestations that announce to us our spiritual election. Our Epistle reading this week from James addresses this expectation, counseling us: "Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord."

But what does it mean to be patient? Are we to just sit around, waiting for some great miracle to befall us? Certainly not! The Epistle of James goes on to give us an agricultural analogy: "Behold, the farmer awaits the precious fruits of the earth, being patient for it until it receives the early and late rains." But what it does not mention is all the work that the farmer has put into tending to his crops, from the tilling of the soil, to the sowing of the seed, the fertilization of the soil, etc. The life-giving rains that he must await are crucial, but these rains alone will produce nothing if the requisite preparatory work has not been done.

As many of you know, I have been very busy recently with the translation of a number of works and texts important to our tradition. Within some of the works on the Order of the Elus Cohen, such as Papus' work on Pasqually or René Le Forestier's tome, we encounter a personage who aptly exemplifies this principle of combining hard work with patience. These qualities are found in Pasqually's disciple, Jean-Baptiste Willermoz. The disciples or "emulators" of the Elus Cohen system were theurgists who sought not only inner revelations, but substantial and demonstrable proofs of their spiritual election, in the form of "passes" which consisted in, among other sensory phenomena, visible luminous manifestations. To obtain these visions and then to have them repeated, was a primary goal of their work. Willermoz, who was the head of the Order in Lyon, strove unsuccessfully for many years to obtain these validations.

Over the years, his letters and writings show him to be encouraged, discouraged, angry, despondent, hopeful, etc....But he never gave up; he always put in the requisite work; and he was, eventually, some ten years after the death of his master, rewarded with the success he so earnestly sought. His success was not due to some sudden discovery of a magic word, phrase, or symbol. It was the result of long, hard work coupled with an indefatigable patience. Pasqually himself had remarked to his students at one point that his "secret" did not consist of a single revelation, but rather the accumulated knowledge and experience of many years of study and practice.

This gets to the very heart of the secret of the attainment of gnosis; the Master's Word; the great and ineffable occult secret...which is ineffable not because of some arbitrary oath-bound secrecy, but because it can only be communicated through gnostic revelation, when the disciple is duly and truly prepared to receive it. The Scripture tells us time and again that we know neither the day nor the hour of the coming of the Lord, but that we must remain vigilant, ever prepared for his arrival. This preparation consists for us in study, meditation, and sacred ritual operations, such as the Mass.

Do not, therefore, be discouraged; but take comfort in the reports of the adepts who have obtained success. And if you have obtained some measure of success, it is upon you to continue the work so that the election is not removed from you, and to be an example of patience and perseverance to your fellow brothers and sisters.