

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ  
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros  
to the Parish of St. Ambelain  
on Friday, January 6, 2017*

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Greetings brethren. Before we begin looking at our Scriptural readings, let us pause for a moment to offer prayers for all those affected by the terrible shooting at the Ft. Lauderdale airport. Take this time to also remember all the victims of senseless violence, praying for the well-being of the survivors, the souls of the deceased, and also that of the committers of these heinous acts, for we must always seek for all to be reconciled...

[Silent prayer & meditation...]

Let us consider first today some of the elements of our reading from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. We see Paul here sounding very much like a Gnostic, proclaiming his mission to, "enlighten all men as to what is the stewardship of the mystery that has been hidden for ages in God...that through the Church, the multifaceted wisdom of God might be made known now to the heavenly rulers and authorities." Now, we know that the Epiphany celebrates the mission to the Gentiles, which in our Gnostic theology refers to the "called" as opposed to the "chosen" or "elect." That is, it refers to the Church's mission to the psychics, that they might ultimately be reconciled and brought into communion with the pneumatics or Gnostics. To make Wisdom known to the "heavenly rulers and authorities" is to announce to cosmic archons that a new and higher law is going to supplant them. This refers to both the archons without and those within.

The idea of a Gnostic Church may at first seem to be a contradiction in terms. As Gnostics, we are adherents of the ancient Mystery Traditions, "alone and chosen" as the Gospel of Thomas puts it, following the path of initiation which is ultimately a solitary path. But the Church, the Ecclesia, is by its nature a communal construct. We would even assert that the Church is primarily oriented towards the psychic population, as a means, through the sacraments, to introduce them to the Mysteries and lead them toward true initiation. At least, that should be a principal function of the Church. Ideally, we shouldn't have to use the term "Gnostic" Church. It should be a given that the Church is led by those who are filled with the holy gnosis.

Early on in the Church's history, however, the Church became an institution not only for, but of and by the psychics. In fact, we see evidence of this division among the disciples of Jesus' inner circle. It quickly became a matter of the blind leading the blind. That is not to say that there have never been any spiritually enlightened leaders within the outer Church - there certainly have been - but the true light of Gnosis never became a lasting and guiding principle of the broader Church.

But the initiatic tradition has always persisted, typically outside of, and, unfortunately often at variance with the Church. We cannot say whether the wider Church will ever see the sort of spiritual reform that we hope for it; but we are, nevertheless, very fortunate to have the Gnostic Church - referring, of course, to numerous bodies collectively - which restores the sacraments to a broader initiatic context, complementing the initiatic rites rather than being at odds with them. Let us pray, then, for the fulfillment of Paul's mission to enlighten all men.