

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ  
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros  
to the Parish of St. Ambelain  
on Sunday, January 15, 2017*

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Hello everybody, and welcome. Last Sunday, at the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, we discussed the Sacrament of Baptism and its importance to the Christian initiate. We mentioned, too, that this rite places an indelible mark upon the soul of the recipient. This mark is known as a Seal. The Gnostic scriptures speak repeatedly about various baptismal seals. Even among the different Gnostic theological schools, be they Sethian, Valentinian, or otherwise, they all agree upon the importance of receiving these seals.

Now, the baptismal seals are not the only seals, of course. The term "seal" refers to the identifying characteristic of a thing or being's essential nature. In the alchemy of vegetables and minerals we read of "signatures," which are nothing more or less than the seal of a thing made visible. In this sense, each human being has its own seal or signature as well. But the baptismal seals are not actually part of the human signature. That is, being impressed upon the fluid envelope, or astral or psychic substance - the soul - by a higher, luminous, pneumatic being, the seal reveals the nature of the one who impressed it, not the one who received it. So the seal marks the soul as belonging to, or being under the protection of, the being who left it.

According to certain Gnostic scriptures, these seals are not to remain permanent. They are merely protections for the soul until it has become fully spiritualized and reaches its final destination, that is to say until it is reintegrated into the Pleroma of Light. The seals also give notice to the archons of what they may or may not submit the soul to undergo. The human, too, who has received true Initiation, and who has refined the faculties of the soul, can learn to perceive these seals as well. At first, the presence of the seals in another may register as a vague intuition, a "feeling." As the psychic faculties are developed - that is, the faculties of the soul - these seals will become so evident that they may as well be emblazoned on the forehead. But of course, it is necessary to have received these seals oneself before one is able to recognize them in another.

Now, for all the good that these seals may do for us, they do not guarantee anything. The seals are gifts and aids that may help us to traverse the planes of the darkness and the light. But they do not every interfere with or strip us of our free will. It is always our own choice whether to activate these seals and allow them to function as they're intended, or to ignore them, or worse, to defile them. To actively work against the seals once one has received them is the worst possible case. The seals are a great honor and a valuable gift, and to reject them puts one in a condition far worse than if one had never received them to begin with. This is not because there is some being actively punishing you for disregarding the seal. It is merely the reaction of what has already been set into motion. What I mean is that the seals will urge us on towards our full awakening and reintegration. If we reject their aid, the seals do not simply disappear. Remember, they are indelible marks. Therefore, the seals go right on along urging us in the direction for which they are intended. When we cooperate with this guidance it is as a blessing. When we act against it, there is a painful friction that will not abate until the will is realigned. But the function and action of the seal remains the same.