

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Sunday, April 23, 2017*

YEAR A - SECOND SUNDAY IN EASTER

Greetings brethren. Gnostics are often accused, among many other things, of being dualists. And this is true in part - but only in part. In this world of matter and action there is indeed an undeniable dualism which pervades and governs all. It is, therefore, a law, so to speak, of the universe of phenomena. But it is also, therefore, what we may consider as a demiurgic law, that is to say not eternal, but subject to perishability with the rest of the manifest universe. But from this limited perspective Gnosticism may rightly be seen as dualistic, as it recognizes the reality of the conditions in which we live and operate. It does not, as do much of the so-called orthodoxy, call "good" that which is manifestly not so, and then have to make up unconvincing excuses as to why so much bad occurs within this "good" universe. Ah! But the simplest answer is often correct. There is one single law which permeates all the the material realm: entropy. And it is only through the infusion of a non-physical, ordering force - call it mind, spirit, intelligence - that this entropy is forestalled.

This leads us, then, towards a theory of causes. And here is where Gnosticism shows itself to not be truly dualistic, as it acknowledges a single and common source for all that exists. So how, you may ask, do we get from a sole, eternal, incorruptible source to a multitudinous, temporal, and corruptible manifestation? It is because of the successive series of emanations, called the hierarchy of beings or some such appellation. According to this theory of emanations, the farther the action gets from the Source, the more subject to aberration it becomes.

Thus, in our first reading from the Second Treatise of the Great Seth, we read of the habitations prepared by Sophia which fell into ruin because of their corruptibility. Nevertheless, because of the perfection of Sophia herself, they were suitable "to receive the saving Word of the Ineffable One." Now, remember that within our Gnostic mythos Sophia, the last aeon of the Pleroma, is alone responsible for the creation - or emanation - of the hylic realm and its lord. Because of this, Gnosticism, if it is true to its own philosophical deductions, cannot ever be truly dualistic, since the theory of progressive emanations does not allow for an absolute evil. Now, there are certainly things that we call "evil" because they are so far removed from the Good. But the Good alone is Absolute.

In our second reading from 1st Peter, we read of more primary causes, of "God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who...has regenerated us into a living hope...and into an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and unfading..." This is a primary emanation within the Pleroma itself, as opposed to the secondary and tertiary causes of Sophia and those which follow. This heavenly habitation is the promise of eternal life for the perfected and spiritualized soul. It is the final reintegration of Man into its primitive and androgynous state.