

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Wednesday, May 31, 2017*

YEAR A - VISITATION OF MARY TO ELIZABETH

Welcome, everybody, to our special celebration of the Feast of the Visitation. This Feast day celebrates the event of Mary, pregnant with Jesus, visiting her cousin Elizabeth, also pregnant, and a little further along, with John the Baptist. Now, it may seem a little odd that this Feast day would fall now, and not some time during the Advent Season. But it would really be better to think of it as existing outside any specific Season of the Church. For, always falling on May 31st, this would sometimes place it within the Easter Season, but in other years in the Season after Pentecost, or Ordinary Time. But it is not particularly pertinent to either, standing alone in its own realm or continuum so to speak. This is true of the whole Liturgical Year, really. Our year is linear because that is how we perceive space and time here below. But the Liturgical calendar actually represents a multi-dimensional continuum, with various planes, realms, timelines, etc., overlapping and intertwining, so that when it is all compressed into our linear space-time, the relationships are not always clear.

Now, this talk of events outside of space-time, etc., are not just some sci-fi mumbo-jumbo. This principle is an ancient esoteric doctrine that is core to our mystical philosophy. In fact, the opening line of our First Reading today from On the Origin of the World - a passage that is one of the most beautiful in all of Gnostic literature - begins: "Paradise is beautiful, and is outside the circuit of the Moon and the circuit of the Sun..." I do not believe that we are to take this as referring to some place that exists just on the other side of the solar system. It seems clear that this passage is referring to the Sun and Moon in their capacity of time-keepers. They are the instruments of precision by which the ancients calculated the days, months, years, seasons, etc. In other words, Paradise, the realm of Gnosis and Life, is something that exists entirely outside of our cosmic space-time. Yet it is not inaccessible to us.

Before we run out of time - no pun intended - let us look briefly at the principal message of our New Testament readings. Although this Feast day is framed around the Visitation of Mary, there is really another theme that serves as its principal lesson, and that is: humility. The Gospel reading speaks of the bringing down of the powerful and the lifting up of the humble. But it is Paul, in his letter to the Romans, where we read this profoundly succinct admonishment:

"Follow the customs of those around you; do not think too highly of yourselves, but be willing to humble yourselves; do not consider yourselves wiser than you are!"

Here endeth the lesson indeed! I know that we've discussed this concept many times previously, but it is important to return to it periodically. In the Gnostic Church especially, we are particularly susceptible to a pride of knowledge, of becoming "puffed-up" as Paul puts it elsewhere. We must always remember that Agape is our guiding light, and that Gnosis is but a tool of the Great Work.