

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ  
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros  
to the Parish of St. Ambelain  
on Sunday, February 11, 2018*

YEAR B - LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY  
(TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY)

Welcome, everyone, on this last Sunday in the Season of Epiphany, which we celebrate as Transfiguration Sunday, rather than in August as many other churches do. The Transfiguration refers to the event on Mt. Tabor, described in our Gospel reading today from Mark, wherein, in the presence of Peter, James, and John, Jesus "was transfigured before them, and his garments became shining brilliant white..." This light that Jesus manifested is held to be the very divine nature itself; a nature in which, even according to orthodoxy so-called, we are all called to partake. It is the reference to this same event found in 2nd Peter that forms the basis of the Hesychast doctrine of the Orthodox Church. And as Gnostics, we see this light as the very Light of Gnosis that we so ardently desire.

Our belief in this is not a contrivance, but rather is supported and reinforced throughout Scripture, including in our second reading today from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. In this very Gnostic passage we find this light being spoken of as God himself, "who shone in our hearts with illumination of the gnosis of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This supports our assertion of the immanence of the true God. This is not, of course, to the exclusion of His transcendence; but it is only the true God of Light that can be both immanent and transcendent, being all in all. The lesser, demiurgic god, whom Paul refers to here as "the god of this aeon" - the word "aeon" here being used to refer to a temporal realm, such as we find in certain texts such as the Pistis Sophia - can only ever be transcendent, since he is himself a creature. The demiurge may, of course, interact with the things of this realm, and influence the hearts of human beings; but he is not the source of the light. He may reflect the light, at best. Alternately, he may attempt to obscure the light, casting a shadow of ignorance over the hearts and minds of humans.

But through the recognition, acknowledgement, and belief in the light, this inner divine nature, that very animating principle of life, will begin to shine forth and transform our soul - that is to say our psychical nature - into pure Spirit. This is how we may come to don the garment of incorruptible light, of which speaks our first reading from the 21st Ode of Solomon. In it, the author says: "I discarded darkness and dressed in the clothing of light." This is accomplished only through the spiritualization of the soul; for "that which is mortal cometh not into a body immortal..." In other words, although the immortal uncreated spirit can be contained within a corruptible vessel, that which is created and corruptible cannot enter into an eternal vessel unless it too has been made perfect. In this ode we read of how the light has totally surrounded and permeated this one, to the point that he has become radiant, just as Jesus upon Mt. Tabor. This is the experience towards which we must strive. As all the Christ's actions, feats, and miracles, the Transfiguration is not meant to lord him above us, but to serve as an example of what we are to become.