

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Sunday, March 4, 2018*

YEAR B - THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

My Brothers and Sisters, greetings. We are now well into the Lenten Season, a season of asceticism and self-reflection. It can be a trying time, but remember that ascetic practices are not intended to abuse us, but rather to train our senses, our corporeal functions, and our mental state in order to conform them to the higher Mind, the Divine Will. The challenges may be difficult at times, and they will be different for different persons and personalities. For some, it is the physical sensations which seek to dominate, while in others it is the emotions; and yet others still will cling to certain intellectual notions.

Now, neither physical sensations, nor emotional responses, nor the intellect are bad things. But they may quickly become so when they dominate and consume our conscious attention, obscuring what is truly important and eternal by what is frivolous, transient, non-consequential. In the Gnostic, and in the Initiate in general, the senses, the emotions, and the intellect tend to be much more keen than in the non-initiate. While this is incredibly useful, it is also very dangerous, as this heightened sensativity can be more easily manipulated by dark or evil forces than the dull faculties of the profane.

It will be noticed demonstrably that the greater the work that we are undertaking, the more intense will be the forces of repression acting against our efforts. These attacks may come from every angle. The direct attacks will vary, depending upon the susceptibilities of the individual. It may be in the form of inciting us towards pleasant distractions; or it may fill us with despair and self-doubt. The attacks can come indirectly too, by working through those close to us. Our closest friends, companions, and colleagues may feel inspired to do or say things to us that they think are done in our best interest, but which actually serve to derail our efforts.

If all of this sounds vary devious and diabolical - it is! Do not underestimate the resolve or the resourcefulness of the dark forces and entities. They will go to any length within their power to prevent the spreading of the Light. It is therefore very important to learn to train the will and the senses; to learn steadfastness; and to recognize such efforts to thwart us before they can be executed.

We are reminded, here, of the importance of the "Art of Polarization" discussed in the Kybalion, whereby one may elevate her consciousness above the point of causation of a particular event. The Kybalion compares this to the swing of a pendulum, with the locus of the pendulum representing the cause, and the extremity representing the manifest effect of that cause. We might not always be able to stop the actual swing of the pendulum, but we can often elevate our consciousness so that the effects of that action swing below us. Learning this valuable skill will not only make us better workers, but will also make us better supporters to the efforts of our friends, family, and colleagues by not allowing ourselves to be used as tools of darkness.

The practices of asceticism can help to develop and hone this valuable skill. The more in tune we are with the spiritual core of our being, the better able we become to discern what is true and good from what is false and unproductive.