

# Introduction

*Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. Malachi 3:7b*

Jesus Christ, in His revelation to the apostle John on the island of Patmos, said in His address to the church at Ephesus, *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*- Rev 2:4. We know that the Lord was dealing with the church's tepidity, referring to Himself as their First Love. For we know Him to be the First (1:11), and we know that God, Who was incarnated as Jesus, is Love (1Jn 4:8). But let us take this text to a metaphysical level: Jesus is our first love also, being the Logos, the Word of God (Jn 1:1-3, 14), all things were created from Him. As such He is our First Love as the Source of our existence and entification.

This book then is a call of Return. Not only as a call to impenitent sinners, but as a mystical call from the inmost reaches of our hearts, as from our True Being, to what we are existentially, as alienated and estranged from What we really are: *Deep calleth unto deep* -Ps 42:7a. This is a call to return to Who we were before we were, a call to return to Jesus Christ as the Logos, our First Love.

## 1. The Mystical Structure in Genesis Chapter One

To be *mystical* is to participate in the mystery Who is God. Jesus said, *Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables* Mk4:11. This mystery includes the book of Genesis chapter one. "Them that are without" are either the

unconverted, they who are carnal believers, or new converts in Christ (1Cor 3:1-4; Heb 5:11-14). Thus as is the kingdom, so also are the Scriptures: there is a *without*, and there is a *within*. The terms for this are exoteric and esoteric. The esoteric is a mystery given to those who are mature (1Cor 2:6-7), whereas the text of Scripture takes on a more parabolic or symbolic role to those who read it exoterically. To be mystical then is to enter into the mysteries of Scripture, and to participate in their esoteric truths.

Esoteric applications of Scripture do not render the exoteric meaning untrue, nor yet less true. Genesis chapter one is also a historical account in its literal application. We simply pass from the form and letter to the inward meaning and spirit of the text (2Cor 3:6). We pass from the literal and historical to the spiritual and ahistorical meanings. Though one may be satisfied with only the form and letter of a text, and thus settle for what is parabolic, or symbolic in relation to the inward meaning. We, however, see multi-levels of meaning, even as layers of an onion.

Genesis chapter one is to be seen on this deeper level, as inward and experiential.

A mystical structure emerges centered on the Hebrew word used for God in our text, not for its meaning, but for the amount of times the word occurs. The Hebrew word is אֱלֹהִים Elohim, and it occurs 32 times. The significance of this amount is realized when we consider the alphanumeric values as in the system called "gem-atrria". This is done by comparing the number 32, the amount of occurrences for Elohim in Gen 1, with other words of equal numeric value. The Hebrew word for glory, as Jesus Christ is called the glory of God (Eph 1:17; Heb 1:3), is כְּבוֹד Kabhod equaling 32. Also the Hebrew word for heart, לֵב labe, equals 32. This is of great significance as will be apparent when we go forward in our study. The previous word, too, when reversed as

לֹבֵל bel, meaning *not, nothing*, which speaks to the negative theological approach in our mysticism. Of great interest in this regard is that the Torah, the five books of Moses, begin with the letter בֵּי beit, and end with לֵי lamed, which if we put these two letters together and read, as is done in Hebrew, from right to left beginning with the last letter as is found in Deuteronomy 32:12 and ending with the first letter in Genesis 1:1, we read the word לֵבֵל -labe, heart. Finally, this mystical structure can be seen again in the number 32 as 22 + 10. Of the 32 instances of Elohim, 10 are when God commands something, *And God said* (v.v. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28 and 29). The other 22 instances are when God directly or indirectly does something.

The number 10 is also significant as it is a full circle completing the cycle of numbers 1-9. The number 22 is significant as it is the amount of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Thus 32 as 22 + 10 is the complete spectrum of expression within the Hebrew language.

We may now see in the opening chapter of the Holy Bible an underlying structure, which speaks of a participation with the mysteries of Glory in our heart. And that this involves an interaction with the 10 Commands of God, called herein, *m'amarot*, together with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

## 2. The 22 Otiyot

Part of the mystical structure of Genesis chapter one are the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet called herein *otiyot*, which account for the other instances of the word Elohim besides the 10 designated as the *m'amarot*. Why are these 22 instances identified as the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet? The obvious reason is that the Hebrew alphabet contains 22 letters.

While letters are characters representing the sounds of

speech, they also contain inner meanings as represented by the letters' forms, and numerical values. We mentioned above gematria, which is the numerical valuing of letters in an alphanumeric alphabet (which the Hebrew and Greek alphabets are), showing a 'dual nature' of letters as both phonetic symbols, and as numerical values. As letters may be converted to numbers, each letter, word, and paragraph then have a numerical value. Often two or more words share the same numerical value, and so in comparing these various words together, a harmony of meanings will emerge, or reveal new meanings altogether.

We must keep in mind that the outer form of a letter is nothing without its inner meaning. This meaning is called "spirit". Without this meaning, the letter is but an empty form. The letters of the Hebrew alphabet as vessels contain the spirit and inner meanings, and are thus vehicles in a deeper contemplation of Christ. But the outward form regarded by itself is at best devoid of life: *...for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.* 2Cor 3:6b.

Language is declaration, especially in reference to God's speech. What is declared? The Glory of God. This occurs on two primary levels: first, the Logos is declared in the Beginning from God, and as God (Jn 1:1); second, the Cosmos itself declares the Glory of God (Ps 19:1-3). The Hebrew word for "declare" as used in Ps 19:1 is סִפַּר *sephar*, meaning to scratch, or scrape; as a word it is used as meaning either to write or to number. Additionally, as will be pertinent in our discussion on the heart, *sephar* also means to polish, as one would polish metal to a reflective hue.

His Glory is declared, not only in the Cosmos, but in every language known (or unknown) to man. This is especially seen in the mystical manipulations of written language. But only they who are willing to go beyond the outward forms of language and writ can touch the inner spirit and taste of the fruits thereof.

Christ the Logos is divine speech (Jn 1:1; Rev 19:13). As the Logos, He is the expression of the entire thought of God. *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* Jn 1:14a. The Logos became God's love letter to us, "written" in such a way as we could relate to, even flesh and blood (Heb 2:14). In a similar way, when we see the letters of a given alphabet written down in a language, we are seeing an "incarnation" of sorts. For the invisible thought and idea is incarnated in the "flesh and blood" of written speech- as ink and paper. In this type of comparison Jesus said of Himself, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending* Rev 1:8a. He identified Himself in this text as the Α, α- alpha and Ω, ω- omega. These being the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet. This concept links to the Hebrew alphabet in that the principle of first and last relating to God is also mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures (Isa 41:4; 44:6; 48:12). And as ... *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard* Ps 19:3, Christ is then the first and last letter of the alphabet of every language, and thus inclusive of all letters in between. And so He is the א -aleph and ת -tav of the Hebrew alphabet, and is every letter in between.

Some of the methods of letter mysticism used in this study may include:

- 1) Pictographic (hieroglyphic): The interpretation of a letter according to its shape, or appearance;
- 2) Gematria: The numerical value of letters, and of their accumulative value in words, sentences, and paragraphs. Meaning is derived by comparing alternate words or phrases of equal numerical value;
- 3) Notarikon: A. The reduced method: the first, or last letters of a sentence or phrase become an acronym to form a word; B. The expanded method: Where the reverse occurs, which would be a word being broken up as if it were an acronym in order to create

a word or phrase.

4) Temura: These are alphabet ciphers where one letter is transposed for another under strict rules. An example is the "At-Bash" cipher, where (as indicated in the name) the first letter transposes to the last, and the last letter to the first. Jesus said, *So the last shall be first, and the first last* - Mt 20:16a. This method appears to have been used by Jeremiah the prophet, where Babel (בבל) is transposed to Sheshach (ששח) in Jer 25:26; 51:41.

5) Permutation: This is similar to temura, only you use the letters given to you in a particular word. This is called *tzeruf*. The word becomes an anagram. An example is *angel* = *glean* = *angle*.

#### THE Hebrew Alphabet:

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>
א	Aleph	Ox	1
ב	Beit	House	2
ג	Gimmel	Camel	3
ד	Dalet	Door	4
ה	Hay	Window	5
ו	Vav	Hook, nail	6
ז	Zayin	Sword	7
ח	Chet	Gate	8
ט	Tet	Serpent	9
י	Yod	Hand	10
כ	Kaf	Palm of hand	20
ל	Lamed	Ox goad	30
מ	Mem	Water	40
נ	Nun	Fish	50

ס	Samech	Support	60
ע	Ayin	Eye	70
פ	Peh	Mouth	80
צ	Tzaddi	Fish hook	90
ק	Qof	Back of head	100
ר	Resh	Head	200
ש	Shin	Tooth/fire	300
ת	Tav	Cross/Mark	400
ך	Final Kaf		500
ם	Final Mem		600
ן	Final Nun		700
ף	Final Peh		800
ץ	Final Tzaddi		900

### 3. The 10 M'amarot

The 10 Commands of God (not to be confused with the "10 Commandments" of Exodus 20), as in, *and God said...*, are known in Judaism as the m'amarot, which is plural for amar-word, or command.

Before considering the m'amarot as God's commands, we must first have a grasp of Jesus Christ as the Word of God. The Greek term translated as 'Word' in John 1:1 is Λογος – Logos, which means the spoken expression of the entire inward thought of the speaker. This is not the grammatical written word, as is ρημα – rhema, being a word of a sentence, or a sentence of a discourse, but is rather the entire inward thought verbally uttered. Now *amar* in Hebrew is *not* the equivalent for the Greek

'logos' (that being instead דָּבָר -dabar), which is all-inclusive of the thought of the speaker, but amar is rather a specific word spoken, an expression of the Logos in the form of commands. The point being made is that as we consider the m'amarot- commands, we must keep in mind that Jesus Himself is the Logos incarnate, being behind all commands, statements, or utterances ultimately. Therefore all words, be they as commands, or script, or the expression of inward thought, go back to Him as the root, or meaning of all communication.

Thus Jesus Christ as the Logos is spoken forth of the Father, and so is the expression of all the inward thought of God as manifest deity. It is in this sense that He is *...the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature* - Col 1:15. This manifest expression of deity occurs through the Logos, not only in His incarnation as Jesus Christ, but also throughout eternity as He is spoken forth of the Father.

*For God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not* Job 33:14;

*God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.* Ps 62:11.

God's speaking here is the Birth of the Son of God in the Beginning, which is an eternal *beginning*. This is what is meant in the text, *Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.* Ps 2:7b. Two things were heard from this eternal speech: the first thing heard was the revelation of deity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the second thing heard was the Cosmos, as being eternally known in its principle and latency. The Logos as divine articulation stands between God and creation as an intermediary. God can look at the Logos and know the Cosmos; the Cosmos can look upon the Logos, especially as incarnated in Jesus Christ, and know God. *...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father* Jn 14:9b. All the beauty and goodness of God is revealed in the Son, heard in the eternal



speech of the Father.

The second thing heard when the Logos was spoken is the echo of that First Voice: all of creation. The spiritual and physical worlds, in their beauty and structure, declare deity—from the stars of heaven to the rocks on the ground (Ps 19:1-3; Lk 19:40).

The 10 m'amarot are thus understood in an intermediary role. As the Logos is a mediator between God and the Cosmos as a whole, so the m'amarot serve an intermediary function between God and the individual entity within the Cosmos. We are not here speaking about the voluntary relationship we may personally have with the Father through Jesus Christ (soteriological), but of a necessary relationship of existence (ontological). The Cosmos relates to the Logos in that she is entified within Him as foreknown in the Beginning. That is, all things in *toto* are foreknown of Him. On an individual basis, however, each thing is existentiated from the Logos through all 10 m'amarot, as each thing is emanated through them. Man has a special relation to this, as we will see later on. The mediatory nature of the 10 m'amarot is seen as the enfoldment of Man within deity, and the unfolding of deity within Man.

As will be seen, the 10 m'amarot are the process of deity as a cosmic incarnation, which enfoldment will be reversed, within us mystically, when each amara is opened up. This will reverse the enfoldment of creation revealing Oneness in Him, a true theomorphosis.

#### **4. Cosmology as Procession**

The Cosmos is anything that is other than God, considered as it is in itself. This is whether we regard it as a whole, or as all the individual entities that may be found therein, as potentially

or actually existent, as possibly or conceptually existent. Yet the Cosmos is nothing in itself, and wholly nonexistent except that it proceeds from, and subsists in and through God (Acts 17:28; Col 1:17). Procession in this sense is simultaneously the concept of the Cosmos as being created *ex nihilo*, that is, created from nothing, and as the unfolding of deity, that is as an emanation (a flowing out) from God.

In saying that the Cosmos is the unfolding of deity is not to assert that the Cosmos *is* God in a pantheistic sense- meaning that the object, or entity is not itself equal to God so as to define Him, nor delimit Him. Nor is it that creation is an emanation of deity which results in a diminishing of the Godhead, nor as resulting in a delimiting dualistic relationship between the divine Essence and the Cosmos. Though there is an emanated Cosmos, the Godhead is unchanged, and undiminished by His Supernal overflow. The highest emanation is that of the Son, born of the Father (which in turn is the Son revealing the Father- Mt 11:27). The Spirit then proceeds from the Father and the Son, carrying with Him the existentiating commands discussed above, which are the emanation of the Cosmos, both as a whole, and as individual existents. This is much like when Eve came from Adam's side- (Gen 2:21-22), though being taken from the side, or rib of Adam, she took nothing from him, neither diminished him in the least. The same is true of the Logos, though being the complete articulation and expression of deity, in His being emanated, takes nothing away from the divine Essence. The Logos is wholly identical to the Essence of deity without losing this identity in His emanation. Also, the Cosmos in its entirety- though yet in sheer potential as the seeds of possibility, were dormant within the Logos. In this sense the Cosmos is from God through the mediation of the Logos. Thus along side of *creatio ex nihilo*- creation out of nothing, we also may say, creation is as an emanation from God. The conclusion?

The Cosmos is both He and not He. As will be seen, the Cosmos is He, insofar as it is His unfolding and Self-revelation as Being; the Cosmos is not He, considered as a thing in itself, and as created from nothing.

The Cosmos as procession from God, being latent in the Logos, does not mean that the worlds are a divine accident. But all that is created is done so according to the divine will and purpose.

In order to understand the worlds as a procession from deity, we must consider God and the Cosmos in relational and multi-dimensional terms. Toward this, we see that the creation account in Gen 1 employs three words in Hebrew:

1) בָּרָא - Bara, created: To cut, or carve out; to form by cutting.

2) יָצַר - Yetzar, formed: To frame, formation; figuratively, as a thought or imagination is formed; or a firm mind.

3) עָשָׂה - Asah, made: To labor, to work, to make; completion.

*Even everyone that is called by my name: for I have **created** him for my glory, I have **formed** him, yea, I have **made** him. Isa 43:7*

These same three words used in the creation account of Genesis chapter one are also used by the prophet Isaiah in the above text. Yet here we are given a more specific purpose as to why, and that is, *for my glory*, which is the kabhod glory of God. These three words, along with the 4<sup>th</sup> word, glory, represent the procession of Man, and of the Cosmos into manifestation and existence from the glory of God.

Thus each of these words constitute a world, universe, or plane of Being. The Hebrew word used for *world* is עוֹלָם - olam, which by an all inclusive definition is an eternal world, invisible and hidden. These worlds are eternal insofar as they are

foreknown entities within the omniscient mind of God, being mysteries of His Being. These are planes of Being, hidden except to those whose eyes God opens (2Kgs 6:16-17). Our use of these terms below are primarily conceptual, and are also used in a somewhat similar way within Jewish mysticism, so we don't wish to be overly dependent on them as this is not necessary in the experience of them. The 3 lowest of these worlds are: 1) Olam ha-Asiah, the world of making; 2) Olam ha-Yetzirah, the world of formation/imagination; and 3) Olam ha-Beriah, the world of creation/spirit. These lower universes constitute planes of existence and non-existence pertaining to the Cosmos when perceived as other than God. Above these are 2 more "worlds" which are levels of the divine, as manifest and non-manifest deity respectively, though independent and transcendent from, the Cosmos. These are: 4) Olam ha-Kabhad, the world of glory; and 5) Olam ha-Belimah, the world of whatlessness. Thus all together these constitute 5 planes of Being and divine Consciousness.

These planes of Being and Consciousness are a 5-fold multiverse, a successive Theophany, God revealing Himself from the innermost Depths to the outermost manifestation. Yet this divine unfolding is in actuality a veiling of the Holy Mystery which is One, and thus simultaneously an enfoldment. In this sense, it is in our best interests to not overly use technical language when approaching these "worlds" as they are mere mental concepts which may take us away from the Truth of Oneness. We don't seek separation through concepts, but rather the Oneness of Being.

## **5. Physiology as Return**

Of the cherubim that the prophet Ezekiel saw he wrote, *and the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a*

*flash of lightning.* Ezek 1:14. This typifies what occurred when the Logos was spoken forth in the Beginning, that He came forth as a flash of lightning (Ps 29:3; 77:18; Ex 19:16). This flash caused the Cosmos to *run* forth, as it were, from the heart of God. Yet not only does the Cosmos run, it also returns as a flash of lightning. In this sense, Logos as Knower and Known, His going forth is the same as His return: *Declaring the end from the beginning* Isa 46:10a.

We know that all things will come before Him bowing, declaring His Lordship (Isa 45:23), and that this is all inclusive in its embrace (Phil 2:9-11). This cosmological return to God is called in Scripture *...the restitution of all things* Acts 3:21a, and as the reconciling of all things unto Himself (Col 1:20). We may think of the Cosmos, resulting from His Word, as the exhalation, and again inhalation of the divine Breath. This will be expounded on later. But let this not be thought of in mere eschatological terms. For in each instance, each moment the Cosmos is thus renewed and sustained by the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Logos (Ps 104:29-30; Col 1:17; Heb 1:3).

What is true of the Cosmos is true also of man, the microcosm. Morally, we may return to God, and be thus forgiven, reconciled, and renewed; in an eschatological sense, we will share in and enjoy a return to God with all creation. Yet now, ontologically, in our multidimensional existence where the End is known in its Beginning (Isa 46:10), while yet remaining on this plane of making, we may simultaneously return into God Himself, from whence we were spoken forth.

*Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts* Mal 3:7b; and, *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.* Jas 4:8a. This is like when someone sees their self in a mirror, turns, and walks away. Turn back around, and you will see in Whose Image you were made (Gen 1:26; Rom 8:29; Col 1:15). Draw near to that reflection, are you getting closer? But, wait!

Isn't the reflection getting closer to you? Soon there is an identity shift, which one is the reflection, and which is the Real? *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* 2Cor 3:18. This is a process of renewing our minds involving all the subtle aspects and attributes of our soul and spirit as we present our body to Him in holiness (Mt 22:37; Rom 12:1-2).

## 6. The Necessity of the Heart

The heart is most important in our relationship with God. He will accept nothing less than our whole heart (1Kgs 11:4; Mt 22:37).

But what is the heart? Obviously we're not just talking about the organ that beats in our chest! Many Christians mistake the human spirit to be the heart, being the highest tier of our tripartite design (1Thess 5:23; Heb 4:12). Yes, in one sense this is true. But, in terms of being a tripartite entity of spirit, soul and body, we focus on the term 'heart' as the center. Even as it is in our physical body, the heart is centered in the chest, not in the head, nor yet in the feet. This is also true of our heart as soul, being 'center' between our spirit and body. Also, the soul is the seat of the self, or our self-consciousness and identity. Thus the heart is a metaphor for the true self, as our ego-self, our 'I', is the closest clue to realizing the transcendent I of God. And so it is not locatable in our body, or spirit, but in our soul. While this linear thinking may help us initially, especially as we in our delusion identify with body and mind, and create a false-self, eventually, we'll see that indeed, our spirit and beyond is where the heart lays. This is as concentric circles more and more subtle as we go inwardly.

The heart and soul in Scripture are nearly synonymous

terms. The difference is between soul as a noun, and heart as a verb. The heart is simply the soul in action. There are several examples in Scripture where they are referred to interchangeably as equivalent terms: See Prov 14:10, 13-14; Lk 2:35; Acts 28:27; Rom 2:5; Heb 4:12; Ps 11:5; 13:2; Sos 1:7; Jn 12:27; Rom 2:9; Rev 18:14.

Defining the heart as 'the soul in action' implies *moral action*. Jesus differentiates *all thy heart*, and *all thy soul*, as in Mt 22:37, and the will is the highest faculty of soul, our psychological self. Though intellect (rational-mind), and emotion are also included, the direction a person takes morally is according to the intention of the will. The heart is the soul in action because the will determines where the soul will go, and what the soul will be in terms of character. This is called *moral action* because the decisions of the will are of necessity right or wrong in relation to moral obligation, whether or not we've chosen what we ought to do, or self-gratification instead.

There are of course proximate and ultimate choices of will. Ultimate or supreme choice is what we decide to live the entirety of our lives for, either the highest good of God and of the universe, or the gratifying of the ego-self. One or the other is the highest end for which we live, and this is irrespective of rationalizations, or justifications given either way. Proximate choices will be all other actions of will that may directly or indirectly be in support of our ultimate choice. This may be something as benign as choosing a brand of tooth-paste, to something more weightier such as whether to help someone out or not. In this sense our heart as the soul engaged in moral action is of utmost importance to God.

Why this needs to be addressed is that the realization of mystical union with God requires of us the attention of all our soul, of our whole psychic self. This is impossible without our heart, which cannot be partially devoted, but must be in complete

and utter abandonment of love and worship to God. This demands that any immoral distraction, any secret sin, or idol must be forsaken so that we may give all our heart to Him. When Jesus spoke of heart and soul together, the heart preceded the soul. Also the prophet Jeremiah said, *And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.* Jer 29:13.

After that is established in practice, we may speak of the heart in deeper ways: the heart as physical organ, the heart as the will and center of the soul, the spirit may also be spoken of as the heart, as well as each successive subtle organ of our psycho-spiritual being. This includes the deeper *chayim*-life, and the *yachida*-Oneness that we will be discussing in their places. The heart considered as deepening levels of our being is as a flower opening up her pedals, layer after layer of subtle centers unfolding in successive order. Our heart is then physical, psychic, spiritual, eternal, the Simple One, to use Eckartian language, the Quiet Desert.

## **7. Gnosis and Metanoia**

We need proper definitions of the word *mind*, that which is being renewed, before we delve further.

The mind as an attribute of the soul, or psychological aspect, is in the Greek *νοῦς nous*, which is the mind as the *organ* of thought. The *nous* is not our thoughts, nor thinking as such, but is our actual mind in its initial state of inertia. The mind as dynamic, actively thinking, cogitating, reasoning is in the Greek *διανοία dianoia*, which means through, or by means of the mind. As can be seen in the Greek texts of the New Testament Scripture, when the renewing of the mind is discussed it is not *dianoia*, the thought processes, but *nous* itself that is renewed. Yet when we speak of mind, we are speaking of something that is



not the brain as such. But we speak of that which is the non-physical organ of thought, as it is *in appearance* the source of consciousness, and psychological perception. To say, "in appearance" is to underscore that identification with mind as such becomes part of what is the illusory self.

Epistemology is the study of knowledge, how we know. When we discuss renewing the mind, knowledge often comes up as a topic. Yet not all definitions of knowledge are created equal. We will discuss two types, one corresponding to each category of mind given above. These two types are: Knowledge, as often used today to refer to understanding and cognition of datum. This will be what can be collected and memorized in the dianoia-mind. The other kind of knowledge is that which is directly perceived and apprehended by nous-mind, referred to in Scripture as γνῶσις– gnosis: to know, to recognize, metaphorically to 'see'.

The word 'gnosis' was demonized within Christianity by the Gnostics' use of it, who taught that access to the divine required special gnosis, or secret knowledge of divine, or angelic names. But Scripturally, gnosis is the very means of having direct realization of Truth, and perception of the truths of Scripture. This gnosis comes to, or is realized within the nous-mind. As believers we need to appreciate the appearance of this word 'gnosis' in Scripture (as usually translated in English as 'knowledge' or to 'know'-etc), and it's application in our lives in regards to spiritual growth. We need not let it's ill repute gained through it's incorrect, or over usage by "Christian Gnostics" rob us of it's importance.

God, Who is Spirit, deals directly with our spirit, not with our mind or body (Jn 4:24; 1Cor 6:17; Rom 8:16). Our nous-mind then as a reflective mirror, while in a state of pure quiet, and calmness can reflect what is in our spirit. We then may interpret the influx perceived noetically by our dianoia-mind, as needed.

Not everything seen in the nous-mind will be intelligible to

dianoia. This is why nous-mind is often symbolized as seeing (Lk 24:16, 31; Eph 1:18), because of the ability to perceive gnosis directly. Dianoia, however, due to its indirect perception is more likened to hearing (Job 34:3; Mk 4:23).

Renewing the mind may be likened to a personal Mount of Transfiguration experience (see Mt 17:1-2). The Greek word translated as *transfigured* is μεταμορφοοω– metamorphoo, from whence our English word 'metamorphosis' came. The meaning is to change from one form or figure to another; to change, to transform. The metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly is a supreme example of this. The same Greek word is used for "transformed", and "changed" in Romans 12:2, and 2Corinthians 3:18. The key to this personal Mount of Transfiguration experience is the renewing of the nous-mind, as one would polish a mirror.

How is the nous-mind renewed? According to the apostle Paul, renewal is through knowledge (Col 3:10). In the West knowledge is confined to the cognitive faculty of the dianoia-mind, ignorant of the passive nature of nous-mind. Most Christians in the West think that "renewing the mind" is about Scripture memorization and study. We try to renew our mind through educating it, and denigrate knowledge to the acquisition of mere text-book data.

Jesus said, *Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.* Mt 22:29b; and the apostle Paul said, *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.* 2Tim 3:5. When we process data, even from the Bible, the mind does so as dianoia-mind, which means that it is busy, and noisily active. And this can only be done part and parcel to what limited information we are working with. Renewing the mind, on the other hand, involves the mind as such, not in part, but as a whole, unified, quiet, and at peace. This is the nous-mind. This occurs through knowledge, but not the kind that affects this

part, or that part of our understanding. But it's through gnosis that this renewing comes, a knowing from our spirit-man, directly apprehended by the whole mind itself. This knowing and renewal of our nous-mind effects a change in consciousness.

Gnosis is to recognize, to perceive, to *feel*/knowledge. Sometimes the word for 'knowledge' is translated from the word *epi-gnosis*, which means full knowledge, or applied knowledge, and is more emphatic in its application, deeply affecting the knower. Gnosis is not mere theory, but is deeply experiential. As applied in old English, to "know" someone may connote sexual relations (Gen 4:1, 17, 25; Mt 1:25). The knowledge by which our nous is renewed is likewise experientially deep, intimate, and fruitful.

To experience gnosis is to be changed in our state of consciousness. We may say that consciousness is awareness, however, to be conscious is to be aware of *something*, whereas we may just be simply aware, even in an unconscious state. We may then be aware without consciousness, but we cannot be conscious without awareness.

To receive gnosis is to be changed from one state of consciousness to another, that is, in terms of what we are conscious of. Our consciousness represents the constant flux and flow of change, and thus may change in its states in accordance to what we witness. We experience changes in consciousness when we're tired, dreaming, excited, stressed, relaxed, at leisure, being in love, bored, etc... Our mind as nous experiences all states of consciousness, higher or lower, in relation to what is witnessed in our body, soul, spirit, or in our environment. Adam and Eve experienced a major shift in consciousness after they sinned in the Garden of Eden (Cp. Gen 2:25 and 3:6-7, 10). Their knowing (which represented a 'false-gnosis') altered their state of consciousness. Repentance, too, represents a change in the state of consciousness. The word 'repentance' as used in the New Testament is translated from the Greek word μετανοια -

metanoia, to change one's mind.

But are we simply after an "altered state of consciousness" -as has been pursued here in the West? Are we in search of a new "high", or an "Eastern" mystical experience? What we normally experience prior to our Awakening are altered states of consciousness! This is in relation to the Pure State of Consciousness as It is in Itself. It's this return to that unaltered state, Consciousness as such, that we seek. This state is not altered despite an infinitude of changes witnessed therein, unless a particular thing is identified with. It's this misidentification that causes our consciousness to be altered from the Natural State of Pure Being and Awareness.

Jesus Christ, too, as a man experienced the changes of consciousness in relation to His growth physically, psychologically, and spiritually (Lk 2:40, 52). Even as divine, He experienced a change in consciousness when He realized that He had incarnated as a man (Phil 2:5-8). The states of consciousness that Jesus Christ experienced were so critical as the Son of God, that it became the focal point of Satan's temptations, *If thou be the Son of God...* Mt 4:3, etc. Satan's use of the word 'if' threatened Jesus' consciousness as the Son of God, by seeking to cast doubt in His mind. Our state of consciousness is important if we're to abide in our True Identity.

This is what renewing our nous-mind is about, identity: whether His Identity, or our limited creatural identity, of which identity are we conscious? Of course the consciousness of the creature is limited to, and often identifies with the contents of consciousness, whereas divine Consciousness transcends consciousness itself. And though it may receive states of consciousness, and operate therein, still, it is not identified with, nor bound by them. To witness the Image of the divine Son in a "Mount Tabor" experience in our heart, is to be changed into that same Image (2Cor 3:18), this transfiguring is of one's

consciousness into, and as Pure Awareness.

Come, let us experience our own return to God, enacting an inward and personal eschatology. This will occur through our inward journey, traversing from glory to glory, being transfigured each moment we open up our inward subtleties. This is likened to the dawning of a new day (Prov 4:18; 2Pet 1:19): when the sun rises on a morning glory, its pedals open up, from the outermost to the innermost, until the fullness of its inward beauty and scent are experienced.