

## TEMENOS

*[Editor's note: "Temenos" is a Greek verb meaning "to cut." We think it means in this context that a sacred space is essentially meant to be "cut off from" normal, everyday, non-sacred or non-spiritual activities. It is something other, and so sacred spaces are devoted to something "other." Temno, is associated with being enclosed, and so a sacred space called a "hieron," that is all things inside this area belonged to God. It is interesting to us that this is the same root that is used in the word hierarchy, which is associated with the first religious hierarchies or the organization of ranks below God]*

AGW (unknown date) Our earthly lives are restricted as though to a narrow shore between a great ocean and a broad expanse of land. Indeed, this shore upon which we live lies narrowly confined within three zones, each zone bounded by barriers which we probe only with great difficulty.

First: we live in a narrow zone at the boundary between earth and sky which we call the zoosphere, a zone that maintains for us air, moisture and warmth, while below is impenetrable solidity and above invisible vacuity.

Second: we live in a narrow zone at the boundary between past and future which we call the present, a zone that permits us to exchange energy and information with the world, while behind is only remembrance and ahead only speculation.

Third: we live in a narrow zone at the boundary between the inanimate and the immortal which we call the sentient, a zone that finds love and hope, while before lies decision and after lies death.

Each narrow region contains what we call the known, while without lies the great unknown. Both the impenetrable solidity of the earth and the invisible transparency of the air conceal from us although on different ways. Both our volatile recollections of the past and our misty glimpses of the future delimit what we know by their respective curtains. Both the well spring of life and the high wall of death differently hide our origins and our destinies. It is only that part of us within the confines of the cell defined by these six barriers that we know. Beyond the barriers we know not how far we may extend, how long we may endure, nor how significant we may be.

What is required of those who must walk along this shore whose path is obscured? Of our destination is hidden, if only the immediate path may be discerned, how do we proceed? We can only focus on how we walk and where we step, taking each pace with care. There are those who only focus on how we walk and where we step, taking each pace with care. There are those who refuse to proceed without knowing their destination. There are those who abandon the path and set off in various directions. But no matter what direction we take, to all the way ahead is obscured. This being so, the wisest no longer dispute the direction to take, but search for how most safely to walk.

But there is further wisdom to be found. Careful observation will permit us to discern greater portions of the path than which lies immediately within our ken. We notice that certain features repeat after so many steps, and counting we see the same patterns repeating at different scales and the path begins to emerge as a fugue of interlaced familiar melodies. Then despite our limited perception, we take our steps in time with these melodies, we find the path may be followed not only with safety but with confidence. Then as our skill increases, we find we may also safely step to variations of the familiar themes, and finally we learn confidently to step with joy to melodies new and more beautiful than we have known.