

ESOTERIC EXTENSION OF TAROT TO DEVELOP SUPERSENSORY POWERS

LESSON 42

Transcriptions from Ann Davies' Class Lectures

Tarot Key 16, The Tower, like the Devil, Key 15, depicts a scene that you may well think unbeautiful. When we discussed the Devil, we tried to show you the deception of appearances. The devil is evil only if you cannot make him run. I hope you have been making him run; I hope every time that depression or illusion has tried to overwhelm you, you have taken out after him and frightened him away. The one thing that ignorance and evil forces cannot stand is scorn or ridicule. Laughter and ridicule are the greatest safeguards against the nonsense of the undeveloped and unevolved devils of life. No tyrant could ever become a tyrant if he were scorned and ridiculed. He can become dangerous only when we take him seriously, because we have that attitude in our own consciousness.

Here, in Key 16, are another group of symbols that appear disturbing, and in a sense they are. We have never said that the path of return is all smiles, laughter, joy and peace. If anyone tells you this he is misleading you because until we have become perfected earth beings it is certain that we will have periods of alarm. Certain disturbances and upheavals are necessary to clear the way toward higher understanding. Trying to avoid them completely will only hinder the rapidity of our own evolution. We must accept sometimes disturbing changes in order to finally rid ourselves of sorrows, despairs, disappointments and frustrations.

Here we see a situation that is quite alarming. Lightning has struck the tower; its inhabitants are falling. A false crown has been knocked from the tower. It is a picture of storm, a real storm, a storm symbolic of something wonderful. Even though for most this storm is a cataclysmic event, it need not be.

Read over again the meditation for this key from the Book of Tokens. Destruction is an inevitable part of construction. You sweep away the old to make way for the new. You must remove old patterns to develop new patterns. You must demolish old buildings to build new ones. One of the errors of many schools of thought is a Pollyanna attitude toward life: Let us smile; let us keep saying all is beautiful and all is good . . . This amounts to a refusal to accept the fact that there are certain times or stages at which disturbances are inevitable in order to bring about the next stage of development. Disturbances must come at whatever stage of growth we are in to enable us to pass to the next.

The Hebrew letter assigned by Qabalah to this key means "mouth." The mouth is very important in occultism. In the Book of Tokens the meditation on Key 16 speaks of the mouth of God, every word that comes from the mouth of God. You have read in the Gospel according to St. John that, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." The mouth as the organ of speech is another association of the key.

The double idea assigned to this key is awakening on the one hand, and the pair of opposites--grace and sin--on the other. Grace and sin are a very important dual concept. Awakening to the higher self is closely involved with the true meaning of grace and sin. We must, therefore, make clear what is meant here by grace and sin in terms of the symbolism of the key, and how we can apply this to developing our own supersensory awareness and

powers. This is one of the most vital elements in the unfoldment of the personality in the overcoming of bondage, and in the awakening of the self to who and what we are.

In our last lesson we discussed one stage of bondage as portrayed by the devil. Now we come to the next stage. What do we mean by bondage? The Qabalistic attributions of the key show us the mouth as the organ of speech. In considering speech, we must realize that everything we say is evidence of what goes on in our consciousness. Our words are expressions of our consciousness. Our thoughts are silent speech. Speech is an expression of consciousness, an attempt to share our consciousness with others.

One statement that I bring up often in relation to this idea is tellingly descriptive of the idea of the mouth as the organ of speech and the power of words. Every time we open our mouths there is only one thing that we reveal: ourselves, our state of consciousness. If we say, "I hate cheese," what do we reveal? Our state of consciousness has an antipathy towards cheese. It is consciousness that we reveal no matter what we say. Hence, when people talk to each other, we might well whisper in an aside, "Don't look now, but your consciousness is showing." This is what we actually reveal.

Words have to be understood. In this key that idea is shown in more ways than one. First, the Hebrew letter assigned to the key means mouth. Next, there are 22 Yods hanging in the background. This refers to the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet which are used for communication, for speech. Then, there are 22 levels of brick making up the tower, for this is the Tower of Babel, built with words. We build our Towers of Babel with our own words even though the words are but an example or representation of what goes on in our consciousness.

If we say that we think a given person is spiritual, we are using words to express our conception of spirituality and in relation to a given person. We might be right, and we might be wrong. Again, we are giving ourselves away. This should not frighten you for we also give away wonderful things about ourselves by the words we use, as well as the little foolishnesses that come and go and are responsible for our tower. The tower is built by the way in which we interpret the universe, by the way in which we look upon ourselves. It is because of our sense of separation that we build the isolated tower on a lonely peak. It could be called our temple or house, in and through which we live, look at the world, and experience ourselves. We lock ourselves away in our own prison tower. This is another picture of bondage, except that here something active is being done about it.

We often do not realize that we are just as bound by what we consider spiritual as by what we hold in contempt. You have read our account of those who talk of spirituality in terms of negative qualities. If one does not smoke or drink or ever use swear words, though angry, he is called spiritual by some people. Their ideal of spirituality is in terms of what is not done. On the other hand in cannibalistic societies, one is considered spiritual if, having killed another and eaten his liver or some other organ, he shares the rest with the tribe. This too is an image of spirituality. If the cannibal did not follow this way of expressing his spirituality, he would be thought of as going against the laws of God and morality. We can sometimes lead ourselves into dire troubles by becoming too bound by the question of what does or does not represent spirituality. It is best to keep an open mind and to permit the

awakening to show itself to us in whatever way it comes. The Tarot keys show us clearly an image of what more highly evolved souls should, can, and will become.

The crown that the lightning flash has thrown from the tower is another part of the very real problem we have in respect to the Tower of Babel and our self evaluation. This is the idea that our personalities are the Primal Will. We assign to the personality the free will and free action that should be assigned to the Higher Self. It is because we tend to assign our choices to what we call our will, to the personality levels, that we also tend to look upon ourselves and others in this very deluded way. We imagine that either we or others should have the power to do or not to do whatever we think is the thing to do or not to do, and we misinterpret our own motives. We are hidden from ourselves in this tower until we learn to awaken. Even those of us who have awakened almost entirely still dwell in towers, though different towers. We need to pass through an experience like the one depicted in Key 16 more than once before we finally develop a completely new habit pattern and release ourselves from the many false babels.

People delude themselves about others, like the two figures shown falling here. They are wearing clothes; self-consciousness and subconsciousness are hidden from each other; they do not understand their true motivation; they are not able or have not dared to look at one another. This, of course, is part of the trouble. I know a couple who, with one part of their natures, wish a happy relationship with each other and are certain that they love each other. However, they are always quarreling or disagreeing about something and finding fault with each other. He does not love her enough, or she is not attentive enough. If she were all-in-all to him, he would not be so interested in going to his club, etc. They make continuous accusations; they punish each other without being consciously aware that this is what they are doing. We have all done this in our time, though I hope we shall do it less. We tend to punish most those with whom we have a close relationship. Punishment hardly shows love, yet if you said to either of the people concerned that he or she did not really love the other but actually had a hidden hatred for the other, you would meet firm and vigorous denial.

Consider a situation that we encounter constantly with our friends, our children or our parents. Something within us is fearful and tends to hunt for rejection because of some little act or fancied attitude on the part of the other. This is a great problem in all human relationships. Yet many serious aspirants are not aware of this searching of the consciousness for rejected elements.

A man of my acquaintance was convinced he had very bad luck with women. He was over 40 and still unmarried. He said it was not that he had not loved. He assured me that he had loved many times, but something had always gone wrong. I knew that he had a phobia about freedom. So he very carefully set about to do the things needed to drive the women he cared for away from him without realizing that this was what he was doing. Thus he managed to retain his freedom, freedom from happiness, freedom from fulfillment and love, because of fear, because of being locked in the tower.

Again, you have often heard people violently protest their honesty. When anyone accuses you of lying, how angry do you become? We all have various degrees of anger, from indignation to fury, when anyone even intimates that we are not telling the truth. This is a

usual reaction for four out of five people. The fifth has a sense of humor, or enough of a sense of humor to make the difference.

The truth is that we all lie. If you feel tired and someone wants to call on you and you know you are not going to be doing anything all evening but are in the mood to be alone, do you say, "Look, I am in the mood to be alone?" We are not advising you to become practiced liars. What we want you to do is to see what we do with words and how we express and show a state of consciousness, and how, through words, we build our own prisons, the source of great misery. We are presenting this in all the more obvious ways. You, yourself, will begin to recognize the more subtle ways as time passes.

Violent affirmation of one's honesty is a dangerous thing. Shakespeare said, "Me thinketh the lady doth protest too much." It is that simple. This is true of almost any response. The truth is that to the degree that we stop lying to ourselves about ourselves we will find that we will be able to be truthful to others, in accordance with reality and not with the phantasmagoria that we imagine.

The important thing to do is to learn how to be honest with oneself, and not worry too much about how honest someone else is with us. The more honest we can be with ourselves the more alert and aware will we become of the degree of honesty of other people, and the less receptive will we be to malicious lying, and the less distressed by prevarications that are apparently necessary so long as human beings still feel hurt by the truth. All of us will tell these "little white lies" when occasion requires them, out of sheer kindness. It would be better if this were not necessary. On the astral levels, little white lies would not work. You could not say, "Don't look now, but your consciousness is showing." It always shows. It is showing right now. You are immediately attracted magnetically to the level that is in harmony with your own consciousness.

While we still inhabit our separate Towers of Babel we will apparently be forced to tell little white lies in order to keep relationships alive, to keep from hurting people's feelings. People are sensitive, for they are fearful, insecure, and lonely. They need to have evidence of being accepted and liked, loved, praised. This is so because they are locked in the towers, self-built towers it is true, but it does not matter whether the tower is built by the self or not. A tower is a tower. It does not matter whether we hurt a toe ourselves or whether another hits it; the toe still hurts. If it hurts we will try to soothe it. It is very important to become aware of self-deception.

Almost always when someone says with emotion, "I have integrity," he lies. It is the amount of emotion behind a statement that you must watch for, in yourself as well as in others. You will notice, if you look closely, that the things we feel we must proclaim with emotion and insist that we have are really the things we do not want. Though we may dislike responsibility, we try to reassure ourselves that we are responsible persons. Our guilt and fear engendered by our hidden knowledge that we would really like to "chuck" it causes us to claim a sense of responsibility. Those who are so vehement are whistling in the dark; they are not being honest with themselves. Those who have real honesty and integrity do not have to proclaim it. They live it. It never occurs to them to think whether they have it. When you find it necessary to proclaim emotionally certain traits, beware!

Realize that with your words you are building and strengthening attitudes that prevent you from seeing truth, from living with reality as you should.

Our Grand Prolocutor has said, "If I were asked what trait indicates the most highly evolved soul, I should say the ability to face reality." The ability to face reality means that a person is not locked away in a false Tower of Babel. He is able to see who he is, what he is and is willing to face these things. He is willing to see whether or not this is what he wishes himself to be.

We all project certain traits on others, as parents project traits on their children. They wish their children to be clever and beautiful, so they project these traits, though people laugh and say, "Only a mother could call that baby beautiful." We must look with the heart of love and see the beauty, but we must also see what is going on in the outer world around us because this is the teaching area. We have to be able to see through and cope with the appearance. If we love, we should love with open eyes, love with self-honesty. We should be able to see that, although the soul is beautiful and glorious, the personality has its quirks and weaknesses. If we do this, we usually get along much better with those we love because we do not love them the less for having foibles; we have our own. If we stop loving people because of their imperfections, it means that we are unable to accept ourselves and no real occultist is going to do this because, in so doing, he locks himself away in the isolation of the tower. When you expect to find your idea of perfection in another, you expect something impossible at this evolutionary level, at this stage of evolution, and therefore you are not facing reality. If you use the consequent disappointment as an excuse to remain isolated, you will remain lonely. If you wish to attract to yourself a truly beautiful relationship, there is only one way to do it, to see to it that you are on a level that can attract and have earned that level of perfection in relationships.

If you want to be loved, you must first know how to love. Giving love is what builds love. Your words, what you say about yourself and others, discloses whether or not you have enough of the love nature to attract the kind of love you want. Some of us become very cunning when we discover what reveals our words are, and we are careful of what we say before people we know to be perceptive. When I had been with Dr. Case a very short time, I was busily dramatizing some event or another and describing to him my reactions to a situation. From my point of view I thought I was showing how saintly I was. He said, "What unmitigated ego!" I looked at him in amazement, then within myself, and I thought, "He is too perceptive. I shall have to be careful of what I say. He sees through me too readily." We are usually too attached to an egoistic image of ourselves. I was presenting myself in such a light. We all do this. When we tell stories we are careful always to present ourselves to the best advantage. There is no reason not to.

The one thing to be sure of is that we are aware of it. We should play and dramatize but we should do it consciously. Had I not practiced a great deal of this self-looking, had I not already had the experience of the lightning flashing into the tower so that I had to take not one, but many clear looks into all parts of myself, I could not have borne his comment. Also, I had a sense of humor. If we have no humor, if we are not able to laugh at ourselves, if we do not train ourselves to laugh at our weaknesses, the shock of the lightning flash will be overwhelming.

This week look into your life and discover where you have isolated yourself in a tower. Some pet theory, a closed mind in a certain direction or an unnecessary vanity you cling to. Try to see these foibles for what they are--mere personality traits. Then let the lightning flash of true perception lead you away from identification with these traits and nearer to union with your True Self.