

TAROT INTERPRETATION

Lesson Twenty-seven

The Tarot tableau for this lesson is as follows:

6	16	17	3
11	9	8	14
7	13	12	10
18	4	5	15

The constant summation is 42, indicating Key 6, the Lovers, considered as the operation of the principle symbolized by Key 2, working through that represented by Key 4. This square corresponds also to the fourth stage of spiritual unfoldment, represented by Key 18.

As you know, Key 6 represents the Disposing Intelligence, corresponding to the letter Zain. Key 2 stands for the Uniting Intelligence, attributed to Gimel. Key 4 is the Tarot symbol for the Constituting Intelligence, corresponding to Heh.

The BOOK OF FORMATION says the Uniting Intelligence is the “essence of glory.” This essence is mind-stuff, symbolized by the robe of the High Priestess, blue and shimmering, because it represents the “Water” of the alchemists, the Astral fluid which solidifies into all the forms of the physical plane. Thus this lesson has to do with the means whereby the Astral fluid is utilized through the activity of the Constituting Intelligence, which is said to “constitute creative force in pure darkness.” The Constituting Intelligence operates principally through the organs having to do with the function of sight. This phase of the Life-power's activity is what leads to true vision.

The power of true vision is a spiritual power whereby the Astral fluid is condensed into visible, external forms. The sight center in the brain, when it is perfected and when it is able to exercise its highest functions . . . that is when metaphysical sight is streaming through and energizing the pineal body . . . is like a lens through which Astral Light, in fluidic form, is actually projected into the outer conditions of the physical plane.

Read very attentively here for this is the essential secret of true magic, or theurgy. He who sees truly is an immediate instrument for the Constituting Intelligence which actually builds the forms and conditions of the external world. The mysterious power of transformation

exerted by adepts, the power of performing miracles, the power to heal sick bodies, the power to bring about changes in the constitution of physical forms, is none other than this true vision.

To see truly is to be able to control the positive and negative currents of the Astral Light. These are the same as the solar and lunar currents of Prana, concerning which a Hindu book says: "To those men who practice, and thus always keep the sun and moon in proper order, knowledge of the past and future becomes as easy as if they were in their hand."

In the alchemical books, also, the Great Work is said to consist in right control of the sun and moon. Note the implication here. The sun and moon are respectively, the luminaries of day and of night, the sources of light whereby we are enabled to see. Their light is the basis of our power of vision. Thus, to control the solar and lunar currents is to control our sight power. Hence the alchemical books tell us the Great Work is performed by the sun and moon, aided by Mercury.

You will remember that the Disposing Intelligence attributed to Zain is also related to the Mercurial sign Gemini, represented by Key 6. In Tarot, Mercury is the Magician, and you have been taught that the Emperor is the same as the Magician—that the Emperor is the Magician after the latter's union with the High Priestess has transformed her into the Empress who bears his children. Thus Mercury, the planet ruling sight, according to astrology, is occultly connected with the letter Heh, although that letter corresponds also to the sign Aries, ruled by Mars.

The head and brain, and particularly the eyes and sight center, are the instruments of what is personified as Mercury. The force at work through those centers is the Mars force. Thus, in Key 1, we see the Magician wearing a red outer garment, and red is the color of Mars. Again, in our color scale, the tint assigned to Gemini is orange, and on the Tree of Life the same color is given to Splendor, the eighth Sephirah which is the Sphere of Mercury. Orange is the mixture of red, the color of Mars, and yellow, the color assigned in our scale to Mercury.

All this may seem to be somewhat involved and technical, but it is included here for the benefit of students who have special aptitude for following up clues leading to the solution of alchemical and magical problems. Readers whose bent lies in other directions need only remember that the essential fact indicated by these correspondences is that the **mental** part of true vision is Mercurial, while the **force** involved is what astrology represents by Mars.

Seeing truly is as much an act of imagination as it is a manifestation of the laws of optics. Our physical vision has to be supplemented by mental imagery (Key 3). The perception of true relationships is super-sensual, the consequence of meditation. To see truly requires the correlation of all our senses and the sublimation of their reports into a higher order of knowing (Key 17). From superficial sense knowledge we only gather material for a structure of error, certain sooner or later to be overthrown by a sudden influx of light from

superconscious levels (Key 16). The balance of conscious and subconscious activities symbolized by the Lovers cannot be maintained while the sense of separateness persists, for while we are imprisoned in that delusion the conscious and subconscious phases of our personal mentality are, so to say, in disguise. Thus the falling figures in Key 16 are shown clothed, but in Key 6, the man and the woman are nude to show that neither hides anything from the other.

Before the Great Work is finished, it seems to us as if we are making various experiments; but when the operation reaches its term, we know that the personality itself has been the subject of the transmutation worked by the true Self from super-conscious levels (Key 14).

The conscious mind is only a transmitter of light from above. Thus, in the tableau given with Introduction to Tarot #1, the Magician is placed over Strength to show that the subconscious modifications come directly from him; but at the same time he is shown lifting his right hand, holding the wand, and pointing downward with his left hand to intimate that he is merely a transmitter of energy drawn from above, which he directs to planes below.

The power, therefore, which tames the lion in Key 8 has its origin in the superconscious. It comes from the height where stands the Hermit, and its direct effect is concerned with processes of body-building related to the zodiacal sign Virgo. The progress of any human being along the Path of Return which leads to mastery, is really a series of bodily transformations. It is a chemical process of purification and sublimation which results in the weaving of a finer and subtler vehicle for the Spirit (Key 9). It is also a process which brings about the elimination of the grosser elements of the physical organism and the fine adjustment of all the forces within it (Key 11).

Our spiritual unfoldment is more than personal. It is a specific manifestation of universal laws and forces in the field of action represented by the life of a particular personality. The whole universe manifests within and through each of us (Key 10). Our lives are always utterly dependent on the cosmic life; but until we reach a certain stage of unfoldment, we do not know this. We come to that stage, and then we become aware of our dependence and gladly submit ourselves to the cosmic life (Key 12). This results in the utter dissolution of false, seemingly separated personality, and this dissolution is the "mystic death" (Key 13). It is a transfer of consciousness from the vehicle to THAT which is the rider in the vehicle. It is a change from the bustle and disquiet of separateness to the still calm of the One Life. Therefore is the chariot, in Key 7, shown at rest with the two sphinxes couchant.

In reality, then, there is no adversary. As man progresses in understanding, he synthesizes the hosts of devils imagined by his ancestors into one Prince of Darkness. Yet even this enemy is a figment of man's imagination. Just as a page of cipher manuscript contains clues which enable a competent cryptographer to decipher it, so do all the semblances of antagonism which the universe presents to the uninitiated reveal to the better instructed the truth that all things are really working together for the liberation of man's spiritual powers (Key 15).

Sooner or later, every human being reaches the stage of unfoldment where the meaning of life is made known, where the significance is revealed, where the Way of Liberation is made plain. The Inner Voice speaks, and, as we listen and obey, delusion vanishes (Key 5).

Then we see all things as they really are. This true vision, which seems to set everything in order, is really perception of an order which is eternally present. The vision does not impose order in place of disorder, though that is what seems to occur when the results of true vision are noticed by those who, as yet, are unable to see truly. Just as the outlines of objects are not really blurred, though they seem vague to a sufferer from astigmatism, so the universal processes are never disorderly, nor are they ever antagonistic to human welfare; and when our vision is corrected we simply see the order which has been there all the while (Key 4).

This better seeing is the result of a definite bodily transformation. It is brought about by the sublimation of the natural body—by a gradual alteration in the body's chemistry and structure.

This makes the physical organism a suitable vehicle for the manifestation of forces more subtle than those which are expressed through the physical instrument of the merely natural man (Key 18).

The fact that adeptship and mastery are consequences of profound alterations in physical chemistry and structure cannot be too strongly emphasized, for in these days there is a tendency to accept the error that liberation is a matter of mind alone—or, at least, a matter having to do with higher planes to the exclusion of the physical (Key 18). The mystic death mentioned on a preceding page is a real dissolution of physical cells—an elimination of cells impregnated by the consciousness of separateness (Key 13). This elimination is automatic, to be sure. In large measure it is imperceptible; yet it is none the less actual. For when the animal nature is brought under control, it ceases to be the animal nature (Key 8). The initial impulses which effect this thorough-going transformation are passed down into the organic level from the human level of subconsciousness, and they follow changes in our mental imagery which are effected by acts of concentration (Key 3).

Continual practice in discrimination, continual exercise of intellectual power, to the end that the functions of conscious and subconscious levels of the personal life may be rightly exercised, is required to effect these changes. This may seem to contradict what has just been said about the work being really performed by the Higher Self. The contradiction, however, is only apparent. In Key 6, it is the power of the angel above the man and woman which is specialized in their particular activities. The angel is the real Actor. Nevertheless, what is below him acts also.

To say the One Self does the work is by no means to absolve ourselves from the duty of effort. So long as effort **seems** to be necessary, so long it **is** necessary. The **illusion** of separateness is not what we are working against, but the **delusion** which does not recognize

the illusion as such, and fails also to understand how that illusion is necessary to the Life-power's self-expression on the universe and in the life of the human race (Key 6).

The real Self of every human being is none other than the Eternal Watcher, pictured in Tarot as the Hermit. Yet so long as one is not aware of union with that One, the illusion of separateness persists and this requires us to act **as if** our own personal practice and our own personal efforts were what bring about the changes through which we experience liberation (Key 9).

Whether we know it or not, we are utterly dependent on the universal Lifepower. Whether we know it or not, we do nothing of ourselves. To realize this marks a definite stage of spiritual unfoldment. We ripen into it, as a fruit which is acid and poisonous in its green state ripens into sweetness and healthfulness in due season (Key 12).

With such knowledge comes a new attitude toward seeming adversity, toward the criticism of others, and especially toward the mental state of those who misjudge and calumniate us. An unripe person hates his adversaries, longs for the day when he shall be freed from all adversities, damns those who speak ill of him, and, unless he is perfectly comfortable, questions the justice of cosmic law. He who is ripe truly loves his enemies, knows that no proverb is truer than the saying, "Sweet are the uses of adversity," pities the mental darkness of those who misunderstand and condemn him, and looks upon discomfort as a signal that he has an adjustment to make somewhere in his personal mechanism (Key 15).

Persons attracted to Tarot and to similar studies are approaching ripeness. They have had glimpses of a state of human existence higher than that which is pictured to us by our daily papers. Thus they have attracted the notice of those riper men and women who are ahead of us on the Path of Return. From those riper elder brothers and sisters of mankind comes all such teaching as this. It is based on their own experience, and this experience we may share, if we choose.

MEDITATIONS

FIRST DAY: Keys 3, 17, 16, 6. The harvest of wisdom ripens in the field of my subconsciousness. Day by day my vision of truth becomes clearer. I welcome the overthrow of my former errors. **The overshadowing Presence disposes me to faithfulness.**

SECOND DAY: Keys 14, 8, 9, 11. In this day's experience the One Life refines and purifies my personality. I am made whole by the Universal Medicine. The One Will forms my flesh and blood, according to its perfect pattern. **The law of liberty sets me free.**

THIRD DAY: Keys 10, 12, 13, 7. The Life-power already is all that I want to be. Its power is the immovable basis of all my personal achievement. That power dissolves everything in

my personality that seems to obstruct its free self-expression. **I am being fashioned into a perfect vehicle for the Victorious One.**

FOURTH DAY: Keys 15, 5, 4, 18. I fear no evil. For as I listen and obey the instruction of the Inner Voice, delusion vanishes. I see the heavenly order wherever I look. **I am being transformed into the likeness of the One Self. That Self sees naught but the perfection of its Divine Manifestation.**

FIFTH DAY: Keys 18, 13, 8, 3. Today marks another stage of progress along the Path of Return. Today marks the utter dissolution of some error of the past. Today is a more adequate expression of the inexhaustible strength of the One Life. **Today brings me nearer the goal of true wisdom.**

SIXTH DAY: Keys 6, 9, 12, 15. This day I manifest harmony. I look upward toward the heights. I rest secure in the knowledge of my union with the Life-power. **I renew my strength by opening myself to the influx of the Divine Beneficence.**