

The Wisdom Alphabet

The letters flow employed for printing Jewish books and periodicals (usually called ‘square Hebrew’), are not really Hebrew characters at all. They are of Babylonian origin, and were adopted by Hebrew scribes about the 5th century B.C. By some occultists this alphabet is called the ‘flame alphabet’ because each of its signs is developed from the character YOD (י) which resembles a flame.

The square shape of the letters is a hint as to the occult purpose of this alphabet. The square is the geometrical figure corresponding to the number 4, which symbolizes, as we have seen order and measurement. Thus the form of the letters suggests that they are standards of measurement for the various aspects of the Cosmic Fire or Flame. 4 is also suggested by the total numeral letters. 22, because $22: 2 + 2 = 4$. 22. Moreover, it’s a number related to that mathematical problem known as the “squaring of the circle.” To “square the circle” accurately is impossible, but one close approximation, used again and again by our Elder Brethren, is that which makes the circumference of a circle $3 \frac{1}{7}$ times its diameter. The smallest whole number which can be taken as a diameter for this purpose is 7, and $3 \frac{1}{7}$ times 7 is 22. It is because of this fact that 22 is never digitized in the various numerological systems.

Because of this relation between diameter and circumference, moreover, the number 11 is regarded as being peculiarly the number of the semi-circle, and $3 \frac{1}{7}$ is the numeral symbol of the radius, or half a diameter. To this last number, taken as a time measure, the numerous biblical allusions to “time, times and half a time” are understood by some occult schools to refer. However this may be, the number 22 and its multiples (44, 66, 88, etc.) are considered to be numbers representing the circumferences of circles whose diameters are 7, 14, 21, 28 and so on. Furthermore, 22 is a number recognized in India as being closely related to the occult power of sound, for Hindu musicians, in the composition of their songs recognize 22 musical tones, and it is significant that for certain forms of composition 7 of these 22 tones are chosen as the basis for a particular composition.

It is not my intention, however, to enter into all the ramifications of this subject. What chiefly concerns you now is the fact that the Wisdom Alphabet contains 22 characters, each of which represents a particular idea. This we know because each letter has a name, designating some object. Taken as a symbol, this object is a key to all the esoteric meanings of the letter. No amount of study can possibly exhaust the implications of even one symbol, thence it is not to be expected that this lesson will provide you with an exhaustive interpretation of the Hebrew' alphabet. What I shall give you is a resume of the principal meanings of each letter. This outline is based upon a similar tabulation published in my Introduction to the Study of the Tarot (now out of print), somewhat extended and amended.

In the following paragraphs, the first item in capital letters is the English translation of the letter-name; the last item is the name of the "Path of Wisdom" corresponding to the letter; the others are Qabalistic correspondences, mostly from the Sepher Yetzirah or Book of Formation.

ALEPH OX or BULL: Apis, Mithra, Dionysos, Christ as a priest, and example of patience. The symbol of creative energy, vitality, solar energy. Because oxen tilled the soil and threshed the grain, they were types of the force used in agriculture, and thus came to be regarded as symbols of cultural activity in general, of the force used in human adaptation of natural forces and conditions.

RUACH: A Hebrew word meaning "vital principle," and also consciousness, as expressed in memory, will, imagination, desire, intellection, and the automatic processes that are in control of involuntary physical functions. Equivalent to Sanskrit Prana, Greek Pneuma, Latin Spiritus, English Spirit. These words all mean Life-Breath, and they all designate an all-pervading, intelligent energy, which is the vital principle of plants, animals and men (and according to the Ageless Wisdom, the vital principle of inorganic matter also.)

FIERY or SCINITILLATING INTELLIGENCE: In Hebrew the name of this path is MTzVChTzCh = 242, or 11 x 22 and when we come to the interpretation of the Tarot, we shall find that this word is very important Qabalistically. At present it is enough to note that FIERY or SCINTILLATING are words which give more than a hint that the letter ALEPH (א) is the symbol of a fiery, sparkling force, like electricity. I have no

doubt whatever that the occultists of old were as familiar with electricity as our modern scientists. Indeed, there are no wanting evidences in old books and symbols to the effect that “modern” electrical science is but a partial rediscovery of ancient knowledge.

The form of ALEPH is somewhat like that of the Swastika, and some Qabalists interpret this as being a reference to the whirling, vortical activity which is at the beginning of manifestation. Other Qabalists (in the Zohar) tell us that this letter conceals the divine name YOD-HEH-VAU-HEH (יהוה - translated Jehovah in English Bibles). They say that the diagonal line represents the letter VAU (ו), and that the parts of the letter above and below this line are two letters YOD (י). As YOD = 10 and VAU = 6, this interpretation of the character gives it a total numeration of 26, which is the numeration of YOD-HEH-VAU-HEH (I = 10, H = 5, V = 6, H = 5, total 26). This may seem fanciful to many readers of these pages, but there is no question as to this being a very old interpretation of the secret meaning of Aleph, and I include it on that account.

Aleph is the first of the three **MOTHER** letters in the Hebrew Alphabet. It corresponds to the element of **AIR**. In the opinion of the Founders of the B.O.T.A. it corresponds also to the planet Herschel or Uranus, but we do not offer this correspondence upon any other authority than our own studies of the astrological influence of Uranus.

The numeral value of Aleph is 1. In the system of transliteration used in these lessons it will always be represented by the Roman letter “A”.

The corresponding color is a pale yellow, and the tone of the scale is E.

BETH HOUSE: abode: location: assemblage of materials by human agency, and their combination according to the laws of architecture, which are based upon geometry.

Thus the letter-name suggests the artistic application of mathematical principles in constructive work. According to Egyptian tradition the sciences and arts which are utilized in house-building were revealed to mankind by the god Thoth, who personifies the operations of intellect.

MERCURY: This is the planetary attribution accepted by the B.O.T.A. It has been used by other societies, and was once regarded as being a “very occult” secret, until it was published in The Occult Review for March. 1910. For reasons which seem sufficient, it may be said that the writer of these lessons worked out the correct planetary attribution of the seven double letters in the Wisdom Alphabet before 1910, and is not indebted to the article in question, nor to any esoteric school (on the physical plane, at least) for his knowledge of the correct correspondences. The planetary vibration called Mercury by the Romans is the source of the intellectual activity personified by the Egyptians as Thoth and by the Greeks as Hermes. This planet rules Gemini (ZAIN) by day and Virgo (YOD) by night.

ABOVE is the symbolic direction attributed to BETH. It is “that which is above” in the Hermetic doctrine. In Hindu thought that which is above is Purusha, the On-Looker, and in modern psychology this is Self-consciousness, which regards the whole external world and subjective states of consciousness also, as a spectacle of which it is the observer, and, to some extent, the director.

LIFE and DEATH is the same pair of opposites already considered in connection with the planet Mercury. A house is an appropriate symbol of Life and of Death, because any house which stands for a number of years is the scene of rejoicing over births and of mourning for the departed.

INTELLIGENCE OF TRANSPARENCY or INTELLIGENCE OF THE LIGHT. The Hebrew, BHIR (=217, or 7 x 31) will be further interpreted in the Tarot lessons. Note that transparency is an adjective applied to that which gives free passage to light, like clear glass, so that the word suggests unobstructed transmission. Transmission is precisely the idea suggested in the mythological representation of Thoth, Hermes or Mercury as being the scribe and herald of the gods. It is through Mercury that the divine wisdom is communicated to man. It is through a transparent, clear, purified self-consciousness, through an intellect trained by careful reasoning, and by practice in concentration, that the inspirations coming from superconsciousness are transmitted to us and applied in constructive activities (house-building) which make our environment a fit habitation for sons and daughters of God. The shape of the letter BETH (ב) is a combination of the character for the letter RESH, with a horizontal base in the form of a parallelogram. A parallelogram suggests measurement. The

upper line and the lower line are of equal length (“that which is above is as that which is below,” the Hermetic or Mercurial axiom). The angle at the left of the parallelogram is that of the figure 4, suggesting **ORDER**, and the angle at the right of the parallelogram is that of the figure 7, suggesting **STABILITY** - two ideas plainly implied by **HOUSE**, the name of the letter. The letter RESH (ר) is the symbol of the SUN, so that BETH suggests the descent of solar force into orderly, stable manifestation in material forms constructed according to mathematical principles.

Observe that everything connected with BETH refers to construction, to human artistic adaptations, in contrast to the implications of the letter ALEPH where everything is referable to the initial vital impulse represented by the BULL. Whatever cultural activities are represented by the letter BETH are more particularly concerned with the adaptation of existing conditions in constructive, rather than in creative ways. BETH suggests putting then together. ALEPH has to do with the unfoldment of life.

In these lessons BETH will be transliterated as “B”. Its numeral value is 2. It is the first of the **DOUBLE** letters, so-called because each has two sounds, hard and soft. The hard pronunciation is indicated by a dot in the letter, called Dagesh (דגש).

Without this dot the letter has the soft pronunciation. In the present instance the hard pronunciation is like B, the soft like Spanish “~B” or “V”, as in Habana, which is pronounced Havana.

The color corresponding to BETH is that of Mercury, a yellow of the same tint as that given to ALEPH, but somewhat stronger. The musical note is E.

GIMEL CAMEL: “The ship of the desert” as the Moon is the ship of the skies. The outline of the camel’s back is also something like a crescent. Astrologically the Moon is said to be moist or ‘water’ and it is well known that camels carry large reserve supply of water, so that travelers sometimes save their lives in the desert by killing a camel and drinking this stored water.

THE MOON: For the reasons given above the Moon is assigned to Gimel. Furthermore the Moon is the symbol of the subconscious, and the subconscious is the connecting link between the various personal centers

of self-consciousness, so that like the camel, the subconscious is the medium of commerce between human beings, especially in telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience and the like. It is the exercise of the subconscious power of perceiving at a distance, which makes it seem to us that we “travel” in certain psychic experiences. In reality we stay right where we are, but we become aware of distant scenes or sounds, and it seems to us as if we travel. What really happens is a sort of radio communication with distant persons and places.

BELOW: That which is below is called Prakriti by the Hindus, “she who works while Purusha, the self-conscious Observer, looks on.” The natural symbol for subconsciousness is “that which is below the threshold of consciousness.”

PEACE and STRIFE. Observations on this pair of opposites will be found in Lesson 5.

CONDUCTIVE INTELLIGENCE. Hebrew MNHIG (=108). The number of this word and the sequence of its letters will receive further consideration in later lessons. Observe that CONDUCTIVE is an idea closely related to that of the camel, also to the idea of association in caravans which is closely related to that of the camel.

It is noteworthy that in making the letter Gimel (ג) in the flame alphabet we begin with the character for VAU (ו), and it will be shown presently that the idea of union or conjunction is also closely related to the latter character. The letter Gimel is the second of the seven double letters. It will be transliterated in these lessons as “G”. Its number is 3; its color is blue; its tone is G-sharp.

DALETH - DOOR or WOMB. Passage transition, conception, development are sonic of the related ideas. A door admits and bars. It is the point of passage from the within or subjective world, to the without or objective world. In consciousness DALETH represents the mental activity which enables us to effect a transition from the inner subjective world to the outer objective plane.

The mental activity in question is Imagination, or the generation of mental images by the subconsciousness, in response to impulses having their origin in self-conscious mental states.

VENUS: Aphrodite Ishtar, the Great Mother; Prakriti, termed “my great womb” in the Bhagavad-Gita. Venus is the planet of love and of art, and both love and art are largely determined by creative imagination. Venus rules Libra (Lamed) by day and Taurus (Vau) by night.

KNOWLEDGE and IGNORANCE. Imagination untrained and uncontrolled by reason generates wild fancies and delusions, and thus the Hindus say that Prakriti is the mistress of Maya, or illusion. Trained and directed by reason, the same mental power enables us to construct rational pictures of cosmic activities, plot the course of planets and electrons, see the invisible with the mind’s eye, and arrive at a correct interpretation of Nature’s symbolic language. Thus the Hindus tell us also that Prakriti is the power whose highest manifestation is Buddhi the principle of right discrimination, the power that enables us to picture things as they are, and so correct the illusions of things as they appear.

LUMINOUS or ILLUMINATING INTELLIGENCE. The Hebrew is MAIR (=251). Interpretation will be given later.

EAST. This direction is the womb of light, the door through which the sun enters upon his daily journey through the sky.

The transliteration of Daleth (ד) in these lessons will be the Roman character “D”. The number of the letter is 4. Its color correspondence, established by its relation to the planet Venus, is green, and its musical tone is F-sharp. Daleth is the third of the seven double letters.

HEH WINDOW: literally “wind-door”. The “wind” is the spirit, Ruach or Prana. A window admits light and air to a house. It gives outlook, also. Thus the window, in every mind is recognized as a symbol of sight.

SIGHT: this attribution is a direct inference from the letter-name. It implies the higher vision of the mind designated by such words as contemplation, discernment, and the like. The Hebrew noun for sight is RAIH (=216).

NORTH-EAST, combines North (PEH) with East (DALETH). **ARIES:** First sign of the zodiac. (All versions of the Sephir Yetzirah agree as to the attribution of the signs to the simple letters.) Aries is ruled by Mars (PEH) and in this sign the Sun (RESH) is exalted.

CONSTITUTING INTELLIGENCE. To constitute is to make anything what it is, to frame, to compose. The ideas of order and classification are implied by this path. Its name in Hebrew is MOMID (=164, or 4 x 41).

The character for Heh (ה) is a combination of the sign for Daleth (ד) with the sign for Yod (י). Some Qabalists, therefore, say that the secret number of Daleth is 14, or Daleth plus Yod, Heb is the number 5. Its transliteration is “H”.

VAU NAIL or HOOK. That which fastens the parts of a building together. That which supports a suspended object. The letter VAU is the Hebrew equivalent of the conjunction “and.” All that is implied by it is developed from the primary idea of junction, fastening, or union. Among the Hebrew letters it is the one corresponding to the Hindu conception of Yoga. Yoga and “yoke” are words bearing a very close relation to each other, and some writers on the development of the alphabet are of the opinion that the original pictograph for VAU was a crude picture of a yoke.

HEARING: unites man to man by speech, and man to God by the Word of the Inner Voice. Practical occultism seeks to develop the inner hearing which links man to the Life-Power, and in Sanskrit works on yoga one of the first results mentioned as being produced by practice in concentration and meditation is the hearing of interior sounds. To the same effect is the story of Elijah, to whom God was made known by a “still, small voice” which required a trained and listening ear before it could be heard¹.

SOUTH-EAST: Combines South (RESH) with East (DALETH).

TAURUS: Second sign of zodiac, ruled by Venus (DALETH). In Taurus the Moon (Gimel) is exalted.

TRIUMPHANT INTELLIGENCE: So called because the results of the Inner Hearing, or success in yoga, make us superconscious, and in superconsciousness we attain that victory over the illusion of separate, mortal existence which assures us, by firsthand experience, that we are immortals, certain to triumph over every seemingly adverse condition, destined at last to conquer that “last enemy, “death”.

The letter Vau (ו) is a YOD (י) with a line descending from its right-hand extremity. YOD is the basic letter of this flame alphabet, and the descending line of VAU symbolizes the descent of the archetypal fire into manifestation. The fact that this letter is connected with Hearing, that is, with the conscious recognition of sound-vibration, shows that the Sages of Israel understood the potency of sound as surely as did the sages of India, who wrote many books concerning the occult meaning of sound. It has been observed in the paragraph devoted to GIMEL that in making the latter character one begins by writing VAU.

In transliteration, VAU will be indicated by “V”. Its numeral value is 6. It is the second of the simple letters.

ZAIN SWORD: a cutting instrument, used in warfare; opposition, division, separation. One aspect of this division is the law of polarity, which finds physiological expression in sex. Another is the separation of human mental states into self-consciousness and subconsciousness.

EAST-ABOVE: Combines EAST (Daleth) with ABOVE (Beth).

GEMINI, the Twins. Third zodiacal sign ruled by Mercury (Beth). The duality of this sign corresponds to the idea of division implied by the letter-name, SWORD.

SMELL: A Qabalistic aphorism says, ‘Properties are discerned by tile nose.’ A keen sense of smell has always been taken figuratively as representing nice discrimination, accurate perception of subtle differences, and sagacity. It is for this reason that Thoth (=Mercury, ruler of Gemini) is sometimes identified with the jackal-headed god, Anubis. The Hebrew word for SMELL is RICH (=218).

DISPOSING or SENSIBLE INTELLIGENCE. To dispose, in the literal sense of the word, is to “place apart,” so that the root sense of the name of this path is related to the idea of separation and division suggested by the SWORD. The Hebrew is HHRGSh (=513, 3x19).

The transliteration of ZAIN (ז) is ‘Z’. Its numeration is 7. It is the third of the simple letters.

CHETH FIELD or FENCE. A definite area set apart for cultivation. Something requiring labor. Something in which work is expected to produce cultural results. The field is a restricted, limited area. It also suggests property rights, specific location, the particular as distinguished from the general.

EAST BELOW. Combines EAST (Daleth) with BELOW (Gimel).

CANCER: Fourth sign of the zodiac. Ruled by the Moon (Gimel). Sign of the exaltation of Jupiter (Kaph).

SPEECH: Mastery of language is mastery of thought~ and there is a sense in which speech is the field in which the practical occultist works. Right speech is always definite, for words define, limit, set things apart. A word is like a fence enclosing some specific idea or group of ideas. The occult power of words is used continually in practical occultism.

Esoterically Speech is the LOGOS or WORD. The Hebrew noun ShVChH, speech, is the number 319, and this is also the number of the Hebrew name for the sign Cancer, SRTN.

IMAGINATIVE INTELLIGENCE, or INTELLIGENCE OF THE HOUSE OF INFLUENCE. The name of this path hints at the esoteric doctrine that all the self-expression of the Life-Power is by emanation through ideas expressed in words.

The same doctrine is to be found in the opening verses of the Gospel of St. John, and it appears in many guises in all-occult writings. The Hebrew title of this path is composed of two words, of which the first is the letter-name Beth, HOUSE. It is BITH HShPO, and its total numeration is 867. By reduction $867 = 8 + 6 + 7 = 21$, the number of the name AHIH, meaning Existence. And 21 by reduction is 3, the number of GIMEL, corresponding to the Moon, which rules the zodiacal sign corresponding to this path. Note carefully the difference between the formation of Cheth (𐤛) and Heh (𐤅). In Cheth the left-hand vertical line comes to the top of the letter.

The transliteration of Cheth is “Ch”. Its numeral value is 8. It is the fourth of the simple letters.

TETH SNAKE: because of its movement, a symbol of vibratory activity. Because it sheds its skin, a symbol of regenerative power. According to Madame Blavatsky, the letter Teth is the symbol of the vital electric energy called **FOHAT** in The Secret Doctrine.

It is also the symbol of the serpent-power, Kundalini, which, according to Yoga philosophy is coiled up in the Saturn center at the base of the spine. This coiled up Kundalini is identical with FOHAT.

It is also one of the many transformations of the all-pervading electromagnetic energy which is manifested to us as the light and heat of the sun. Thus this letter Teth is definitely a symbol of solar force.

NORTH ABOVE. Combines NORTH (Peh) and ABOVE (Beth). In LEO, the fifth sign of the zodiac, ruled by the Sun. Some modern astrologers believe it to be the sign in which the planet Neptune is exalted. The Hebrew noun for Leo is ARIH (= 216). It is identical in numeration with the nouns RAIH. Sight, RVGZ, excitement, wrath, and GBVRH, severity or strength. The force of this identity in numeration will be more apparent to you after you have studied the next two lessons.

TASTE. The Hebrew word has connotations meaning eating and drinking, savor, and digestion. Assimilation is the idea behind all these meanings, and assimilation is the process of releasing solar energy from food. Taste also implies discrimination, refinement and experience. A man of taste is one who has digested his experiences. The Hebrew noun is LOT (=109).

INTELLIGENCE OF THE SECRET OF ALL SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES: Knowledge of what alchemists call the Great Arcanum. In some of the alchemical writings this Great Secret is said to be closely related to the process by which living things grow. All things grow by the assimilation of solar force from those things which constitute their proper food. Here is a hint for prepared minds. It will be more fully developed in later lessons.

The Hebrew name of this path is composed of two words, SVD, secret, and HPOVLVT, of spiritual activities. SVD = 70, the value of the letter Ayin. HPOVLVT = 206. Thus the total numeration of this path is 70 plus 206 = 276.

The letter Teth (ט) must be carefully distinguished from the initial form of the letter Mem (מ), given below. It will be transliterated as “T” in these lessons. Its numeral value is 9. It is the fifth of the simple letters.

YOD HAND: The hand is distinctively the possession and symbol of man. No other creature on earth has a true hand, and this organ is the instrument of all the higher activities of the human mind. The fact that all the letters of the flame alphabet are derived from YOD, 11 in the opinion of many Qabalists, really suggests that all phases of the Life-Power’s self-expression are manifestations of the essentially human nature of the Causeless Cause. The Life-Power is like man, says the Ageless Wisdom, whose pet weapon of offence is the word “anthropomorphism.” The hand is a symbol of dexterity, skill, power, might. It appears in the symbols of all races as a representation of deity, as a sign of the Supreme Spirit.

NORTH BELOW. Combines NORTH (Peh) with BELOW (Gimel).

VIRGO; Sixth sign of the zodiac. Ruled by Mercury (Beth), and sign of the exaltation (sublimation) of Mercury.

COITION: The Ageless Wisdom has always sought the most accurate and expressive symbols. Because this teaching is the product of pure minds, to whom all things are pure, it abounds in symbols and imagery which never fail to give offence to people who are burdened with complexes about all things having to do with sex. The physical embrace of man and woman is the highest exercise of creative power. It is also the most ecstatic of sense-experiences (under right conditions, which, unfortunately, seldom prevail in these days of ignorance). Thus it has been chosen by sages again and again as the symbol of the metaphysical union, of the merging of subject and object which occurs in the experience of superconsciousness. That perfect union of the two lower modes of consciousness, self-consciousness (the Man) and subconsciousness (the Woman) is described in alchemical writings as the copulation of the Fixed (self-consciousness) with the Volatile (subconsciousness). And the alchemical “copulation” is connected with processes under the ego, as you will learn in more advanced Sections of the rulership of the zodiacal sign Virgo in our work.

INTELLIGENCE of WILL. The name of this path refers to the state of consciousness attained by those who learn what “Will” really is, not one person in ten thousand does know, for there is nothing more misunderstood by the generality of human beings.

The Hebrew word for Will is RTzVN (=346), and it also means “pleasure, grace, favor, delight, acceptance, and satisfaction’, Acceptance is the clue to right understanding of this term. If you learn to accept the Cosmic Will as the only true Will, if you embrace it as a lover his beloved, if all your thoughts, words and acts are truly from that One, Omnipresent Will - then you will know the bliss of union with the Higher Self, the satisfaction and delight of the certainty that all your actions are expressions of a power which cannot possibly fail, the pleasure that is always experienced by him who knows beyond peradventure that all his actions are expressions of adequate power and wisdom, so that whatever he does must of necessity be well done.

In these lessons, YOD will be transliterated as “I”. Its number is 10. It is the sixth of the simple letters.

KAPH: The palm of the hand, or the hand in the act of grasping. Grasp, control, authority. Management, direction. The palm is also a symbol of destiny, because belief that the lines of the hand are a map of life is universal in the Oriental countries where this symbolism originated.

WEST: Opposite of EAST (Daleth).

JUPITER: This planet, called the “greater fortune” is complementary to Venus “the lesser fortune,” just as the direction West is complementary to East. West is the place of the sunset, and it consequently represents the completion of enterprises, just as East symbolizes their beginnings. A man is said to be successful when he has all the details of his enterprise in his “grasp” (Kaph), and the old astrologers regarded Jupiter as conferring this mastery of conditions. They held that Jupiter’s influence in the horoscope does not become strong until after middle life, when the sun of personal existence has passed noon zenith and is moving toward the WEALTH and POVERTY; These are the extremes of worldly fortune, the outward and

visible signs of a man's 'grasp' of circumstances When Jupiter is well-aspected in a horoscope that grasp is strong. When it is ill-aspected that grasp is weak.

INTELLIGENCE OF CONCILIATION or **INTELLIGENCE OF DESIRE**. This path is also called "The Rewarding Intelligence of those who seek." Conciliation is the accommodation of differences, the adjustment of circumstances, the establishment of order. The root meaning is closely allied to the astrological interpretation of the Jupiter vibration, as well as to the idea of 'grasp' symbolized by the letter Kaph. The difference in shape between Kaph and Beth should be noted carefully. In earlier lessons Kaph (כ) is transliterated as 'K'. Its numeral value is 20. It is the fourth of the double letters.

LAMED OX-GOAD: that which incites the OX (Aleph) to action, and guides it. LAMED is also a verb in Hebrew, and means "to instruct."

NORTH-WEST, combines NORTH (Peh) with WEST (Kaph).

LIBRA: Seventh sign of the zodiac. Ruled by Venus (Daleth), and sign of the exaltation of Saturn (Tau).

WORK or **ACTION**; Equivalent to the Hindu idea of Karma. The linking of the idea of work with the idea of instruction or guidance indicated by the letter-name LAMED is worthy of consideration. The Ageless Wisdom cannot be learned by listening to lectures or reading books. This knowledge must be gained experimentally. We must be "doers of the Word" not hearers only. Work, serve, these words are forever on the lips of Those Who Know.

FAITHFUL INTELLIGENCE; The Hebrew, NAMN (141) means "faithful", established, durable, constant. "Lasting" as well as faithful. The root of the adjective is AMN, whence our confirmative word, Amen. It is really the same as the name of the Egyptian god Amon or Amun, and is one of the most important technical terms in the Qabala.

Lamed is the seventh of the simple letters, transliterated "L", and having a numeral value of 30. It is the only Hebrew letter which extends above the line of writing in Hebrew manuscripts. The horizontal line of the letter is the same height from the bottom of the line as the tops of the other

characters. In Jewish newspapers, however, the top of the letter is sometimes bent back over the horizontal line, for convenience in typesetting, thus: ם

Occasionally it is omitted altogether.

MEM WATER; Literally, “Seas”, for MEM is a plural form. According to the alchemists. Water is the “mother, seed, and root of all minerals.” It is the first mirror, thus it implies or symbolizes reflected life, the reproduction of the Life-Power in the various objects and forms of selfmanifestation.

NEPTUNE: This planetary attribution is the one advanced tentatively by the B.O.T.A. It seems to be in accord with the nature of the letter, and also with the Tarot card corresponding thereto.

STABLE INTELLIGENCE: Said to be the source of consistency in all the numerations. It is noteworthy that the oldest meaning of “consistency” given by Webster is “Condition of remaining at rest, or quiescent.” Another meaning is, “Condition of standing or adhering together, or being fixed in union, as the parts of a body; existence; firmness; coherence; solidity.”

If you understand by “being fixed in union” what Hindus mean by Yoga, you will be near to understanding the esoteric meaning of this path. The Hebrew for 160 = קי"ם.

Note the difference between Mem (ם) and Teth (ט). The form of the letter given here is used at the beginning and in the body of Hebrew words. At the end of word another form is employed. This will be found on a subsequent page.

MEM is transliterated ‘M’, and its value is 40. It is the second of the three mother letters in the alphabet.

NUN FISH, as noun. As verb, NUN means “to sprout, to grow.

SOUTH-WEST: Combines SOUTH (Resh) with WEST (Kaph).

SCORPIO: Eighth sign of the zodiac. Ruled by Mars (Peh). Some modern astrologers make it the sign of the exaltation of Uranus (Aleph).

MOTION or MOVEMENT. The Hebrew word is HLVK or HLK, and means ‘to go, in the most versatile applications,” according to Bresslau. All motion, it should be remembered, is change. Walking, moreover, implies progress. Observe that the sequence of letters in HLK means, according to the attributions given above, VISION (H), DIRECTIVE ACTION (L) and CONTROL (K). HLK =55.

IMAGINATIVE INTELLIGENCE: Said to be “the ground of similarity in the likeness of beings.”

The Hebrew is DMIVNI (=120), and this word, because of its number, as well as because of the sequence of letters composing it, is of great importance in certain allegories of Rosicrucian origin. They will be explained in due course. Note that the first letter of the word is Daleth, corresponding to Venus, which rules love and hate, in both of which imagination plays a very important part.

Nun will be transliterated as “N”. Its value is 50. Its shape (נ) should be distinguished from Gimel (ג). It is the eighth of the simple letters.

SAMEKH PROP or SUPPORT. Some think the original form of this letter resembled a tent peg. Support implies assistance, help, and like ideas. Thus the letter suggests means whereby some condition is bettered, and from this idea of improvement are derived certain special meanings ascribed to the letter in connection with the Tarot and alchemy, such as improvement, sublimation, purification, transmutation, and the like.

WEST-ABOVE: Combines WEST (Kaph) with ABOVE (Beth).

SAGITTARIUS: The Archer, ninth zodiacal sign ruled by Jupiter (Kaph).

WRATH: The Hebrew is RVGZ (216, a number equivalent to that of RAIH, Sight and ARIH Leo; see above). It means excitement, trembling, vibration, and is closely allied in significance to the Greek thumos, desire or appetite, and the Sanskrit Rajas, the fiery desire nature, or alchemical **SULPHUR**. Note, in this connection, that Sagittarius is a fiery sign.

TENTATIVE INTELLIGENCE, or INTELLIGENCE OF PROBATION OR TRIAL. Said to be “the first temptation by which God tests the devout.” What this means is more fully explained in Section C. At this point it is

enough to say that the working of the Rajas quality in human experience is what provides us with most of the tests of our knowledge. If we can utilize the fiery desire-force aright we can become masters of practical occultism. Furthermore, the name of this path suggests that the right use is necessarily experimental, that it involves tests, that it is concerned with doing - with what chemists would call “laboratory work.” And these tests are concerned with our aims for this path is assigned to the zodiacal sign of the Archer - he who aims at a target.

The shape of Samekh (ס) should be carefully distinguished from that of the final MEM (ם). In the example of the character here given I have followed the form of the letter used in some of the older Hebrew manuscripts, where the curved form is more emphasized than in modern Jewish printing.

Samekh is transliterated in these lessons as “S”. Its value is 60. It is the ninth simple letter.

AYIN THE EYE. The same Hebrew word also means “a fountain,” perhaps because eyes are fountains of tears, perhaps because a well is like an eye in the desert. Observe that since the eye is the organ of sight, Ayin may be regarded as the means whereby the power attributed to the letter HEH finds expression.

An eye is also an orb or circle, suggesting limitation. Again, the eye suggests appearances, and because our eyes are easily deceived, as all know who have studied optical illusions, this organ is a common symbol of false knowledge or illusion, which is called Avidya in Sanskrit. The force of these implications will be better understood when you have studied the Tarot card corresponding to Ayin.

WEST BELOW: Combines WEST (Kaph) with BELOW (Gimel), for a noun meaning ... The Hebrew is ShChQ = 408. The same letters are used “that which is pounded, dust” also “thinness; hence, thin cloud, thin vapor which obscures the sky.” This last meaning relates symbolically to illusion or Avidya considered as the veil of appearances which conceals the true nature of causation (symbolized by the sky, or heaven.)

Mirth, as here expressed, is usually employed in the bad sense of jesting, scorning or mocking. It refers to the laughter excited by incongruity, the mirth which is caused by the familiar elements of comedy, which are

human weaknesses, distress and pain. Any “comic strip” will illustrate this point sufficiently.

CAPRICORN: Tenth sign of the zodiac. Ruled by Saturn (Tau), and sign of the exaltation of Mars (Peh)

RENEWING INTELLIGENCE: In Hebrew ‘Renewing’ is spelt MChVDSH (358). The number of this word is important in the Qabalah, because it is also the number of NChSh, Nachash, the Tempter in the allegory of Genesis, and of MShICh, Messiah, the Anointed One (i.e. the Christos). This numerical identity is the clue to an important esoteric doctrine which will be explained in later lessons of the Four Year Course.

Ayin is transliterated “O”, and corresponds to “O” in the Roman alphabet, but it is not really a vowel. The exact pronunciation is well-nigh impossible for Europeans. The numeral value of the character is 70. It is the tenth simple letter. Its form (װ) should be carefully distinguished from TZADDI (צ).

PEH THE MOUTH: both as the organ of speech, and as the organ which begins the process of assimilation. “Out of the mouth are the issues of life,” we are told. As the organ of speech, the mouth indicates the means whereby the Life-Power utters itself. As the organ which begins the mechanical and chemical processes which break down food in order to liberate its solar energy for the use of the body, the mouth is a symbol of the form-destroying power.

NORTH: Place of the sun’s annual “death.” Darkness, cold, sterility.

GRACE and SIN: See Lesson 5. Grace and Sin are synonyms for Beauty and Ugliness. All that is said there bears upon this attribution.

EXCITING or ACTIVE INTELLIGENCE: The Hebrew is spelt MVRGSH (=549), and is derived from RGSh, which signifies impetuous action. Students of astrology will see how closely this corresponds to the Mars vibration.

They will also understand why the Mars activity is associated with the Mouth, since this vibration is indeed the means which enables the Life-Power to utter itself in forms, and is also the force which apparently breaks

down every form sooner or later.

Transliteration: “P”. Numeral value: 80. Fifth double letter.

TZADDI FISH-HOOK: That which pulls the fish (Nun) out of Water (Mem); “to hook” is to draw, to entice, to procure by artifice. This letter, like Nun, has a particular application to the Christian aspects of the Ageless Wisdom. You will remember that Jesus chose fishermen for disciples, and promised them that they should become “fishers of men.” The letter-name has also a bearing upon the mental processes in meditation, the function assigned to Tzaddi by Qabalists.

SOUTH-ABOVE: Combines South (Resh) with Above (Beth).

AQUARIUS: Eleventh sign of the zodiac. The sign which is symbolized by the Kerub having the face of a Man. When the Sepher Yetzirah was written, the planet Uranus was not known to exoteric astrologers, and hence Saturn (Tau) was regarded as ruler of Aquarius. Modern astrology assigns the planet Uranus (Aleph) as ruler of this sign. There is a sense, I believe, in which these two rulerships can be reconciled.

MEDITATION: According to Hindu psychologists, who are exceptionally accurate in their classifications of mental activities, meditation is “an unbroken flow of knowledge in a particular object.” It is a diving into the depths of the mind for ideas, a process of fishing for truth.

NATURAL INTELLIGENCE: The Hebrew is NIVTBO (127) from the verb TBO (81), “to sink, to dive.” This verb also means “to impress.” Distinguish the formation of Tzaddi (צ) from that of Ayin (ע). In these lessons it will be transliterated “Tz”. It is the eleventh simple letter. Its numeral value is 90.

QOPH BACK OF HEAD or KNOT. The back of the head is the location of the medulla oblongata, which forms a knot on the spinal cord at the nape of the neck. The medulla controls or greatly influences many functions which make it directly responsible for bodily life. It never sleeps.

SOUTH-BELOW: Combines South (Resh) with Below (Gimel).

SLEEP: The period of physiological repair, during which nerve-substance undergoes the subtle changes which prepare the advancing student of practical occultism to experience and understand facts concealed from

ordinary men. These facts are the basis of the teachings of the Ageless Wisdom.

PISCES: Twelfth sign of the zodiac. According to the old astrology it is ruled by Jupiter (Kaph). Modern astrologers are inclined to make Neptune (Mem) its ruler. Venus (Daleth) is exalted in Pisces.

CORPOREAL INTELLIGENCE: The Hebrew is MVGShM (=386) numerically equivalent to the name IHShVH, Jesus. This correspondence is striking because the early Christians used the Fish (Pisces) as the sign of their religion, which has been dominant during the Piscean Age, now at its close.

The vertical line of the letter QOPH (ק) descends below the manuscript line in writing. It is the twelfth of the simple letters, is transliterated as “Q” (but never followed by “U” as in English), and has a numeral value of 100.

RESH THE HEAD or FACE OF MAN. The head of man is the seat of the guiding power. It signifies organization and direction. The face is the countenance, from the Latin *continere*, to hold together, to contain. Thus Resh symbolizes the controlling power, the source of directive action, and is also a symbol of the gathering together of many activities at a center, even as all the feelings, sensations, motor impulses, and the like are centered in the head of man.

SOUTH: Place of the sun at his meridian height.

FRUITFULNESS and STERILITY: This pair of opposites has been discussed in Lesson 5.

COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE. The Hebrew word is KLLI (=90), the value of the letter Tzaddi, and there is a correspondence between the occult meaning of Resh and that of Tzaddi, which will be explained in due course. Note, too, that the idea behind collective is the idea behind face or countenance.

Resh (ר) should be distinguished from Daleth (ד), and from final Kaph (כ) It is transliterated “R”. Its numeral value is 200. It is the sixth of the double letters.

SHIN TOOTH or FANG. Probably a serpent's fang. It suggests sharpness, acidity, penetration, and destructive action.

FIRE: According to the Bible the Spirit of God is a 'consuming fire.' The Hebrew name for that Spirit is RVCh ALHIM, Ruach Elohim. The letters of these two words represent the numbers 200, 6, 1, 30, 5, 10 and 40, giving a total of 300, which is the numeral value of SHIN. Therefore SHIN is called "the holy letter".

VULCAN: Some astrologers include this among the planets, and its fiery nature indicates its correspondence to SHIN, which, however, is advanced by the B.O.T.A. as being merely a tentative attribution.

PERPETUAL INTELLIGENCE: The Hebrew is ThMIDI (464). SHIN (ש) is the third mother letter. It is transliterated "Sh". Its numeral value is 300.

TAU CROSS, symbol of the number 4. The Egyptian TAU was a tally for measuring the depth of the Nile, also a square for measuring right angles. Among the Hebrews it was a sign of salvation. Freemasons regard it as a symbol of salvation from death, and of eternal life.

THE PALACE OF HOLINESS IN THE MIDST, SUSTAINING ALL THINGS.

The letter Tau is regarded by Qabalists as central in creation. Its relation to the other letters may be better understood from the following diagrams. The Qabalists figure space as a cube. The top of this cube is ABOVE (B), the bottom is BELOW (G). One side of the cube faces East (D), one West (K), one North (P) and one South (R).

The upper half of the western side is West-Above (S), the lower half of the same side, West-Below (O). The upper half of the Eastern side is East-Above (Z), and the lower half is East-Below (Ch). The upper half of the Northern side is North-Above (T), the lower half of the same side is North-Below (I). The upper half of the Southern side is South-Above (Tz), the lower half is South-Below (Q).

The vertical lines of the four corners are North-East (H), South-East (V), North-West (L) and South-West (N).

If the top of a cube be painted Yellow, the bottom Blue, then these will represent Beth and Gimel. In the center of the Eastern face a Green circle will represent the letter Daleth, and the upper half of the same face, Orange, will represent Zain, while the lower half, Orange-Yellow, will stand for Cheth.

The circle in the center of the Southern side will be Orange for Resh, the upper half will be Violet for Tzaddi, the lower half Violet-Red for Qoph. The circle in the center of the Western side will be Violet for Kaph; the upper half of the face of the cube will be Blue for Samekh. The lower half Blue-Violet for Ayin. The circle in the center of the Northern face will be red for Peh, the upper half of that side will be Yellow for Leo, the lower half Yellow-Green for Virgo. The vertical line at the South-east will be Red-Orange for Vau, that at the South-West Green-Blue for Nun. The line at the North-East will be Red for Heh, and that at the North-West Green for Lamed.

The following diagrams show the coloring of the six faces of a cube, as above described:

The letter Tau is Qabalistically conceived as being at the very center of this cube.

SATURN: Saturn is the cohesive, crystallizing, limiting vibration, called Capricorn by Jacob Boheme. It rules Aquarius (according to old astrology) and **DOMINION and SLAVERY:** For comments on this pair of opposites, see Lesson 5.

ADMINISTRATIVE INTELLIGENCE: The Hebrew is NOBD = 126. Its meaning will be more fully explained in later lessons. In addition to the 22 characters given above, the Hebrew alphabet has five other signs, called finals, because they are the forms in which five of the letters are written when they come at the end of words. These final letters are:

KAPH	MEM	NUN	PEH	TZADDI
500	600	700	800	900

All but final Mem extend below the line of manuscript or print. Final Kaph should be distinguished from Daleth and Resh, final Mem from Samekh. Final Mem has a square base, whereas Samekh has a rounded base.

The numbers assigned to these finals are not always employed in reckoning the values of Hebrew words, almost never in reckoning the older technical terms such as divine and angelic names. Or the names of scriptural characters in the older books of the Bible.

Hebrew is always written from right to left. Thus the name Adam, in Hebrew characters would be written MEM DALETH ALEPH. In transliterating from the Hebrew alphabet to the Roman characters, words are written as in English, from left to right, and then Adam would be ADM. I have purposely left it to your own ingenuity to tabulate the results of this lesson in some scheme which will show at a glance the color, sound and other attributions of the alphabet. It is very much better to make such a tabulation for yourself, as nothing will so quickly fix in your mind the attributions. After doing so, you may like to compare your work with that of some other student. For those who wish to make such a comparison, I can recommend the tabulation made by Mrs. Hazel L. Fauber, 55 Hicks Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. Mrs. Fauber can supply photostat copies of her work. Members who live in New York can procure these tabulations for 75 cents apiece. Those living outside the city should add at least ten cents for postage and wrapping.

The twenty-two letter-names, as spelt in Hebrew are as follows:

Aleph	ALP = 111	Lamed	LMD=74
Beth	BITh=412	Mem	MIM = 90
Gimel	GML=73	Nun	NVN=106
Daleth	DLTh =434	Samekh	SMK=120
Heh	HH=10	Ayin	OIN = 130

Vau	VV = 12	Peh	PH=85
Zain	ZIN=67	Tzaddi	TzDI = 104
Cheth	ChITh=418	Qoph	QVP=186
Teth	TITh=419	Resh	RISh=510
Yod	IVD=20	Shin	ShIN=360
Kaph	KP=100	Tau	TV=406

You will notice that whenever a Hebrew word is given in these lessons, its number is also given. The number is the sum of the letter-values, and is a clue to many esoteric meanings of the words, which will be further, explained in the next lesson.

Some readers of these pages may wonder what the practical value of all this study of a dead language can possibly be. To enumerate the more recondite advantages, such as the deeper insight into the Bible that even this slight knowledge of Hebrew affords, or the magical control of cosmic forces through the sound and color formulas revealed by the divine and angelic names, would at this point be of little advantage. The best reason for learning thoroughly the esoteric meaning of the Hebrew letters is that each letter names an object whose counterpart or equivalent is a familiar part of your everyday experience.

By learning the true correspondences and implications of each letter you gradually establish a habit of subconscious association for Door, House, Window, etc., quite different from your casual and possibly false associations derive (from unthinking response to your environment. Now, when every object in your environment begins in this way to set up true associations in your mind, sooner or later you will begin to reap the mental and physical harvest of this seed planting. Once you have learnt the attributions of the letters thoroughly, it does not matter whether you think consciously about them.

Wherever you go the things you see will automatically induce the associative activity of your subconsciousness along the new lines. The seed-thoughts planted by your conscious study of this and subsequent lessons will thus begin to bear fruit. New ideas will begin to spring up in your mental garden.

A new conception of life and of your part in it will gradually be evolved from your inner consciousness. And with the growth of this new conception will come better adjustment to conditions and circumstances, better insight into the meaning of experience, closer rapport with those who are ahead of you on the path of liberation - those Elder Brethren for whom the symbolic language upon which this alphabet is grounded is the habitual medium of thought.

The thinking of these enlightened men is not confined to their brains. Thought radiates, and when your mind is attuned by this study to a state of greater receptivity, you will begin to ‘listen in’ to the broadcasting of truth which is effected by Those Who Know, simply because they think.

¹ ShMIOH = 425, Hearing (Ed. Note)