

The True Creative Self

The paths upon which you are to meditate in connection with this lesson are:

1. The path of Triumphant and Eternal Intelligence, corresponding to the letter Vau, to the zodiacal sign Taurus, to the color red-orange, and to the note C-sharp.
2. The path of Constituting Intelligence, corresponding to the letter Heh, to the sign Aries, to the color red, and to the note C.
3. The path of Luminous Intelligence, corresponding to the letter Daleth, to the planet Venus, to the color green, and to the note F-sharp.

The goal of all these paths on the Way of Return is the Sephirah Chokmah, to which is assigned the Grade of Magus in the Rosicrucian Order. What a Magus really is may perhaps be better understood if we quote from our old acquaintance, Eliphas Levi:

“Magic is the divinity of man achieved in union with faith; the true Magi are Men-Gods, in virtue of their intimate union with the divine principle. They are without fears and without desires, dominated by no falsehood, sharing no error, loving without illusion, suffering without impatience, reposing in the quietude of eternal thought... A Magus cannot be ignorant, for magic implies superiority, mastership, majority, and majority signifies emancipation by knowledge... The Man-God has neither rights nor duties; he has science, will and power. He is more than free, he is master, he does not command, he creates; he does not obey, because no one can possibly command him. What others term duty, he names his good pleasure; he does good because he wishes to, and never wills anything else; he co-operates freely in everything that forwards the cause of justice, and for him sacrifice is the luxury of the moral life and the magnificence of the heart. He is implacable toward evil because he is without a trace of hatred for the wicked. He regards reparatory chastisement as a benefit and does not comprehend the meaning of vengeance.”

That such a man is truly, to use a Rosicrucian phrase, “more than man,” we must all concede. That none of us is able to form more than a vague conception of such a character must as freely be admitted. Yet we altogether miss the point of the Wisdom Teaching behind these lessons if we do not see that this is no ideal picture of what we may sometime become. On the contrary, it is the barest of outlines of what the true Man in every human being really IS.

Levi hints as much in the fifteenth chapter of the third book of his *Le Grand Arcane*, where he tells us:

“The serpent had said: ‘Ye shall be as gods.’ Jesus Christ, crushing the head of the serpent under the charming foot of his mother, dares to say: ‘Ye shall not be as gods, nor as God, but ye shall be God.’”

“Ye shall be God, for God is my Father, my Father and I are but one, and I will it that you and I shall be as one also.”

Remember that Levi writes this as an occultist and Qabalist. Superficial readers of his works may believe, with A. E. Waite, that he stultifies himself by pretending to accept the dogmas of the Roman Church. They who can read him in the original French must be struck by the exquisite care with which he chose his words. He did not pretend to accept. He did really accept, as do all occultists, the very dogmas which orthodox theologians believe that they hold. He accepted these dogmas because he understood that they are magical formulae, embodying much of the wisdom of the ages. He did not accept, nor do we, the naive and childish interpretations of the ordinary churchman. He must have known, as we do, that the very name “Jesus Christ” is an occult formula, indicating the exact process, or method, whereby the true Self of man frees itself from the bondage of delusion. For reasons of his own doubtless good ones Levi kept his peace with the theologians of his day by an apparent agreement which was really a profound dissent from their opinions. Perhaps we might be wiser if we adopted a similar course.

At all events, what he has written concerning the Grade of Magus will help us to form a conception of what is meant by reaching this stage on the Way of Return.

The first of the three paths leading thereto is the 16th, and as we travel upward on the Tree of Life, it begins in Chesed, the Sephirah to which was assigned the Grade of Exempt Adept. This path remains closed until the aspirant has attained to the Grade of Magister Templi. One cannot enter into the state of consciousness which Qabalists call “Triumphant and Eternal Intelligence” until all the vehicles of personality have been cleansed and mastered. Indeed, only a Master of the Temple can possibly experience this degree of consciousness.

What we know about it we must perforce gather from the descriptions of the sages, since we are not by any means even at the portals of this Grade. Yet we may profit by an examination of the name of the path.

In Hebrew it is 158=נצח"י, formed from the noun נצח, Netzach, with the letter Yod added as a suffix. Netzach is the name of the Sephirah to which the Grade of Philosophus is assigned. Qabalistically, the addition of the letter Yod to this noun is the addition of the hand, suggesting the practical application of a ripened philosophy. To make this practical application, one must be master of his own personal instrument. To be serviceable in order to perform service — that is the idea. A hard lesson, this, but one that we all must learn thoroughly, sooner or later.

The Qabalistic dictionary says that 158 is represented by the words חיצים, arrows; חנק, to strangle; and מאזנים (Aramaic)¹, balances. We find little difficulty with “arrows,” because an arrow suggests the penetrating directness of the concentrated magical will. Nor does the word “balances” puzzle us to any great extent, since we know by this time that equilibrium is the basis of the Great Work. But “to strangle”? At first glance this appears to have little connection with the idea of a state of consciousness described as “triumphant”. Yet further consideration will remind us that in every ancient symbolic initiation the candidate had to simulate death. More than this, strangulation is death by constriction of the throat, and this path that we are studying is connected with the letter Vau, and with the sign Taurus, which rules the throat. What it really means is the total eradication of the sense of separate personality. The false belief in “self” must be strangled before the true Self can be made manifest.

Consider this word חַתָּךְ in connection with the Tarot keys. Cheth is represented by the CHARIOT, Nun by DEATH, and Qoph by THE MOON. Add the numbers of the keys together and you have 38, by reduction 11, the number of JUSTICE. Lay these cards on the table before you, and seek their significance in this connection, making notes as in other lessons. The CHARIOT represents mastery of the vehicle of personality. DEATH indicates the transforming agency whereby that mastery is made effective. THE MOON is a picture of the slow process of unfoldment. JUSTICE sums up the whole matter. The equilibrium of the balances is unattainable if the bias of the false personality tips the scales. To direct the arrows of volition to their mark is impossible while the aim is spoilt by personal considerations. While yet we speak of rights and duties something of the old error of separateness remains to be killed out, and there is something yet of the lie of division to be strangled.

This is the first step toward the Grade of Magus. Until it is taken, the Eternal Intelligence cannot be known. To be conscious of eternity instead of time is to leave behind every vestige of the old, false “self.” It is to effect the great conjunction indicated by the grammatical use in Hebrew of the letter Vau. This is what is indicated in the lines which H.P.B. culled from the Book of the Golden Precepts:

“The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real.

Let the disciple slay the Slayer.

For —

When to himself his form appears unreal, as do on waking all the forms he sees in dreams:

When he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the One — the inner sound which kills the outer.

Then only, not till then, shall he forsake the region of Asat, the false, to come into the realm of Sat, the true.

Before the Soul can see, the harmony within must be attained, and fleshly eyes be rendered blind to all illusion.

*Before the Soul can hear, the image (man) has to become as deaf to roarings
as to whispers, to cries of bellowing elephants as to the silvery bussing of
the golden firefly.*

*Before the Soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the
Silent Speaker be united, just as the form to which the clay is modeled is
first united with the potter's mind.*

For then the Soul will hear, and will remember.

And then to the inner ear will speak —

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE."

The picture of the Hierophant sums up the whole meaning of the 16th path. He is the Silent Speaker of the foregoing quotation. His voice cannot be heard while the insistent demands of the false personality are clamoring for recognition.

We must not misunderstand this talk about killing. It does not mean suppression. Neither does it mean sacrifice, as men understand sacrifice. When Levi says that sacrifice for the Magus is the luxury of the moral life, he is not indulging in meaningless, high-flown phrases. Would there be any sacrifice in changing a counterfeit bill for genuine money? What loss would follow giving up a paste jewel for a diamond? Even so there is no loss, but a great gain, in ridding oneself of the delusion of separateness. We repeat, this is not suppression, which only submerges the error for the time being in the depths of the subconscious. It is the total eradication of the mistaken opinion. It completely roots up the erroneous conception of personality which results from mistaking illusion for reality. The illusion persists, as we have pointed out before but the belief that it is real, as one might mistake a piece of rope for a snake, is at an end.

Note the result. "Then the Soul will hear, and will remember." Liberation is the result of knowing the truth, and the Greek word for truth means literally "not forgetting." We, immortal, have forgotten our immortality. Essentially divine, we have identified ourselves with the worm of the dust. This delusion we must strangle. Then we shall remember who and what we really are. Our inner ears shall then be opened to the Voice which reveals

the mystery of union, which no human language can possibly convey. Then shall we again experience the triumphant consciousness of eternal life. Then shall we be truly “more than free.”

This is not all, as Levi shows by saying that the Magus does not command, but creates. This phase of his activity is developed by the state of consciousness symbolized by the fifteenth path. The old Hebrew verb translated “create” in our Bibles means literally “to cut out.” Creation is an act of discrimination, and act of definition, and this act is the result of what Qabalists call “Constituting Intelligence.”

The Secret Wisdom of Israel says that the fifteenth path bears the name *מַעְמִיד* (Constituting) because it constitutes the substance of creations in pure darkness. A hint of similar import is in the Gospel of St. John. “That which hath been made was life in him (the Logos); and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness overcame it not.”

The same L.V.X. appears in Bible symbology under the figure of the Lamb, borrowed from the Hindu symbol of Agni, god of fire. The Lamb refers to the mystery of the cosmic sacrifice. In one sense the wise have always regarded creation as a self-immolation of the Life-Power. In one of his sermons, the Rev. R. J. Campbell expresses the matter thus:

“What one dimly perceives is that God cannot help himself in this matter; it is written deep in the nature of things; it has to be; omnipotence cannot alter it. ‘The lamb slain from the foundation of the world’ is no figure of speech but the very heart of all reality. The revealing of the glory of God carries with it a cosmic Calvary in which we, his children, are individually called to share.”

Thus the first letter of *מַעְמִיד* is that which the Tarot pictures as the HANGED MAN. Creation is the self-limitation of that which is really limitless. It is the assumption of the illusions of time and space, the apparent differentiation between “I, the Maker” and “That, the Made.” But that which hath been made, we are told, was life in the Maker. By reason of its own nature the Life-Power is creative, yet creation involves the appearance of the Not-I. The limitless takes on the form of the limited. The

eternal expresses itself in time. The boundless establishes boundaries. The universal enters into existence as the particular. The absolute enters into the conditions of the relative.

Thus we see that limitation, or definition is the basis of the Constituting Intelligence, and this is plainly indicated by the grammatical meaning of Heh, the Hebrew definite article, corresponding to English “the.” With the idea of limitation enters the idea of something opposed to the creative power, of something external which is the object of that power’s mental contemplation. Thus the second letter of MOMID, Ayin, “the eye,” is connected with the restrictive, materialistic influence which astrology associates with Saturn, and this letter is represented in the Tarot by the DEVIL. We point out these correspondences to assist you in your meditation, but the mere enumeration is by no means sufficient. If you hope to penetrate into the profounder mysteries of the occult gnosis, you must ponder these details, earnestly desiring further illumination.

By traversing this path the aspirant to the Grade of Magus associates himself mentally with the cosmic sacrifice. Thus he unifies his being with the current of the cosmic creative impulse. Levi says, you recall, that he who can master the currents of the Astral Light becomes the depository even of the power of God.

The origin of the fifteenth path is in Tiphareth, so that one must go back to the state of the Lesser Adept to traverse it. That is, one must identify himself with the SON, the Solar Logos (see lesson 4). It is the SON, one with the FATHER, who is the perpetual sacrifice.

In other words, at this stage of initiation the aspirant so identifies himself with the Solar Logos that no shadow, even, of the sense of separateness sullies his consciousness. This is why he must first pass through the sixteenth path, wherein the last vestige of the false personality is eradicated. The least tinge of personal motive vitiates the seeker’s endeavor to utilize the cosmic creative energy. To do nothing for self, but all for the Self, is here the test. It involves what the world misinterprets as sacrifice. Thus the third letter of מעמיד, like the first, is explained by the Tarot picture of the HANGED MAN.

Again, to be a conscious channel of the cosmic creative impulse is to know the state which Hindus call Kaivalya, isolation. How lightly, now that Eastern Wisdom has been translated into our daily speech, does one hear this isolation spoken of. How few in any generation can grasp the meaning of the injunction in Light on the Path: "Stand alone and isolated, because nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the eternal, can aid you." We have too much glib speech about this high attainment. Even a little real thought about it soon shows us that it should inspire in us a profound awe. Yet he who would really be a conscious creator must so stand. Creation begins at a point where there is nothing other than the creator. All this is set forth in the symbolism of THE HERMIT.

The last letter of מעמיד looks ahead to the path we have yet to consider in this lesson. What it means will be explained in due course. In the meantime let us consider the word מעמיד as a whole, from the point of view afforded by Gematria. Its numeration, 164, corresponds to חדבקים, "ye shall cleave;" חיצון, external; and עמודים, the Pillars (Jachin and Boaz). The suggestion is that the Constituting Intelligence is one of close union with the Life-Power, in which the manifested cosmos is seen as external to the Self, and as proceeding from that Self at the heart of all being. Again, it is a state of perfect equilibrium, understood as the support (pillars) of existence.

To put the matter more explicitly, the aspirant to the Grade of Magus, passing through the fifteenth path, vividly identifies himself with the great Heart of Life, knows himself to be one with the Great Within whence all that is manifested and external proceedings, and realizes in himself the union of positive and negative, of Mercy and Severity, the pillars of the Tree of Life. We who know only a little about this stage of unfoldment can but faintly imagine what the actual experience is like; but even what dim image will prepare us for the time when, instead of knowing about it, we shall truly know it.

Moreover, two Hebrew words are concealed in מעמיד - מים, waters, and עד, eternity. He who has reached the height of the fifteenth path sees himself alone at the center of the Great Sea of Eternal Subsistence. For him there is naught but the true Self, the Self which is ALL. One of the commonest symbols of this state is that of a great ocean. Boundless it extends on every hand, its circumference nowhere, its center everywhere. These words

correspond to no actuality of our sense-experience, and are meaningless unless one has known the Presence beyond personality. Yet we believe that to most readers of this lesson they will convey a great deal of significance.

We read a deal of cheerful talk about our being sons and daughters of God, and therefore by birthright creators. Some of it is most plausible. One might almost think he had only to learn the fact in order to be master of the cosmic creative energy. We are creative always, to be sure, because our lives are inseparable from the One Life and share its potencies. Yet most of our creation is negative, because we lack knowledge and skill. We might as well stop deluding ourselves, and face the facts. Not one person in ten thousand even begins to grasp the principles of occult science. Of those who understand the theory, not one in a thousand even begins to grasp the principles of occult science. Of those who understand the theory, not one in a thousand becomes a skilled creator until after a number of incarnations.

To reach the high altitude of attainment represented by the fifteenth path is to have gained knowledge and skill far beyond that of an Einstein, or Edison, or a Steinmetz. Scientists of the physical world are like children playing with toys, in comparison to the initiate ready to enter the Grade of Magus.

Why, then, should we be concerned with these far-off achievements? Simply because we must make a beginning sometime. The Path may seem long and wearisome, but we may look at it in two ways. One way is to cavil at its length and difficulty, thinking of it as something which separates us from the goal. The other is to look upon every step as part of the goal itself. Whenever we try to perform the least action selflessly we are in training for the post of Magus. Every attempt to abstract our attention from the illusions of the external, every endeavor to stand alone, every moment spent in imaging ourselves one with the Heart of Life, is part of the realization which shall some day be ours.

Every human being is destined sooner or later to gain that high eminence. We say this, even though we have been at some pains to show that the true Self in us is even now the Magus of the Eternal. Our poor words cannot convey to you the grandeur of the ultimate realization, yet they may serve to bring you the good news of your certain destiny. This, after all, is one of the main purposes of these lessons.

Coming now to the last of the three paths leading the Grade of Magus, we find that in Hebrew its title is מאיר, Luminous, a rabbinical Hebrew adjective derived from אור, light.

The path joins Binah to Chokmah, the Mother to the Father, the Root of Water to the Root of Fire. It is the only path connecting the Grade of Master to the Temple with the Grade of Magus, and unlike the two paths preceding, is attributed to a planet, Venus.

With the astrological meaning of Venus you are by now thoroughly familiar. You know that its influence is dominant in a nerve-center at the throat, and have learned that it governs the generation of metal images by sub-consciousness in response to impulses and suggestions originating in the self-conscious field. Its activity is summed up in the one word, Imagination.

Here we may again refer to Eliphas Levi. He says:

“Imagination is actually as the eye of the soul, and it is therein that forms are delineated and preserved; by its means we behold the reflections of the invisible world, it is the mirror of visions and the apparatus of magical life. Thereby we cure diseases, modify the seasons, ward off death from the living, and resuscitate those who are dead, because this faculty exalts the will and gives it power over the universal agent.

“Imagination determines the form of the child in its mother’s womb, it gives wings to contagion, and points the weapons of warfare. Are you exposed in battle? Believe yourself as invulnerable as Achilles, and you will be so, says Paracelsus. Fear attracts bullets, and courage turns them back on their path.

“Imagination is the instrument of the adaptation of the Logos. In its application to reason it is genius, for reason, like genius, is one amidst the complexity of its operations. Demons, souls, and the rest, can therefore be really and truly be held by means of the imagination; but the imagination of the adept is diaphanous, whilst that of the uninitiated is opaque. The light of truth traverses the one as though a crystal window, and is refracted in the other as in a vitreous mass full of scoriae and foreign matter.

“The things which contribute most to the errors of the vulgar and the extravagances of the insane are the reflections of depraved imaginations in one another. But the seer knows with an absolute knowledge that the things he imagines are true, and experience invariably confirms his visions.”
(Mysteries of Magic, p. 66 ff)

Eugenius Philalethes (Thomas Vaughan) says that he regards the cosmic imagination as being the cause of the great ocean of primordial substance, the chaos whence all forms proceed. “If it (the chaos) be created,” he writes, “I conceive it the effect of the Divine Imagination, acting beyond itself in contemplation of that which was to come, and producing this passive darkness for a subject to work upon in the circumference.”

The adept learns to utilize the cosmic imagination by means of his passage through the fourteenth path. It may be employed safely by none who has not surrendered himself to the direction of the Higher Self. The Tarot hints at this, for III, the number of the Empress, is the reduction of XII, the number of the HANGED MAN. Hence, too, the first letter of מאיר is that to which the HANGED MAN is attributed.

What does this mean? Primarily that the only way in which to be sure of using the cosmic imagination in its purity is to silence the waves of personal consciousness, to hold the personal mind in suspension. Thus we find the books on Yoga defining that art as the subduing of the modifications or waves in the mind-stuff, which they compare to a lake. When the surface is still it gives a clear reflection. Likewise, when we have silenced the tumult of self-consciousness, the Luminous Intelligence of the cosmic mind can be reflected by and through our personal lives. He who succeeds in this undertaking does so by prolonged practice in concentration and meditation. When he succeeds, he appears to have miraculous powers, and is able to manipulate the chaos, or root-matter, in ways which dumbfound all beholders. Yet such an adept always says, as said Jesus, “Of myself I can do nothing.” By stopping the modifications of the personal mind-stuff he lets the light of the Divine Imagination shine through, unobstructed.

That is all, but what can be written in a few words takes several life-times to accomplish, and the beginning of the work is precisely the kind of self-training which has been explained in this course. We may sigh, sometimes, at the difficulty of the work; but the truth is, living as do the brutes and the

uninitiated is really a thousand times harder. It is easier to live the life of the adept than the life of the profane. Paradoxical as it sounds, this is eternally true.

We find an illustration of this in the art of piano-playing. Hours of practice have made the muscles of the artist obedient to his will. He plays difficult passages with little effort, and actually finds them easier to execute than the five-finger exercises with which he began. An hour of Beethoven and Liszt and Brahms tires him less than the beginner's half-hour of Koehler or Czerny. So it is with an adept. His years and lives of practice have made the most difficult problems easier for him than the ordinary routine of the average man's life.

Do you seek something more immediately applicable to your present problems? Well, it may help you to remember that when you studied the Tree of Life you learned that every Sephirah contains a whole Tree in miniature. You may be far from traversing the fourteenth path in Tiphareth, to say nothing of Kether; but you follow it down here in Malkuth every time you make an effort to stand aside and let the cosmic imagination work through you. If, whenever you have something to do, whatever it is, you will pause a moment to reflect that all the imagination you can put into it is an expression of the universal image-making power, the task will go more smoothly. You will have more confidence in the successful issue of your undertaking, and the event will justify your confidence. Thus you will continually be adding little acts of practice to the store which will eventually bring you to adeptship.

The second letter of מאיר brings out another phase of the state of mind called Luminous. Aleph is the Ox, and its primary significance is derived from the fact that oxen are beasts of burden, symbols of patience. The aspirant for the post of Magus must be more than Master of the Temple. He must be ready consciously to assume his share of the burden of creation. To utilize the Luminous Intelligence, one must become a partner with the cosmic life. In the words of Light on the Path, the attitude of an initiate approaching the Grade of Magus is indicated by the admonition: "Let the darkness within help you to understand the helplessness of those who have seen no light, whose souls are in profound gloom. Blame them not — shrink not from them, but try to lift a little or the heavy Karma of the world; give your aid to the few strong hands that hold back the powers of

darkness from obtaining complete victory. Then do you enter into a partnership of joy, which brings indeed terrible toil and profound sadness, but also a great and ever-increasing delight.”

The third letter of מאיר is the same as the fourth of מעמיד, constituting, and has been explained on the preceding pages. Detachment is necessary. Seeking for results, identification with the illusions of appearance — all that partakes of these must be extirpated from the consciousness of the Magus. Yet this detachment is unselfish. The HERMIT, although he stands alone, far above the others who toil upward, is really actively cooperating with them. He holds up a light for their guidance, and is concerned only with their progress, as one may see from the earnestness of his downward gaze.

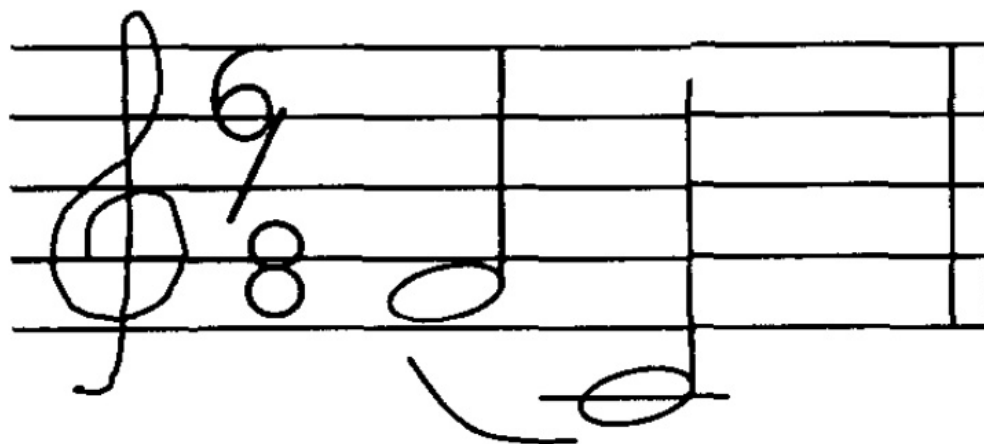
The last letter of מאיר sums up all these that have gone before, and is the key to the Luminous Intelligence. It is Resh, letter of the Sun, represented in the Tarot by the 19th Key. “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein,” said Jesus. Childlikeness is the test of mastership. The intensity of the initiate’s consciousness that he is truly the Eternal Child of the Eternal Father is the measure of his understanding and the root of his wisdom. We hear a great deal in these days about the Masters of the Wisdom, about their wonderful knowledge and powers, about their moulding of their affairs of nations. From all this we are often led to the conclusion that they must be men of great foresight, in the human sense, great schemers and planners. This conclusion, however, is not according to the teaching of the Ageless Wisdom. All that a Master of the Wisdom endures and practices in his long training has the one object of enabling him to lead the planless life. We have been told again and again that the Masters are of the Patanjali School. It follows that they are unconcerned about results, that they are so perfectly concentrated that neither past nor future enters into their calm consideration of the thing to be done now. Let none misunderstand us. We do not mean to say that the Masters may not see far into the future, may not be prophets among prophets, knowing the outcome of many currents of activity whose end is not perceived by ordinary human beings. What we mean is that they do not make personal plans, that they have no need for plotting out a scheme for future action, because their whole training has made them so exquisitely

responsive to the direction of the cosmic superconsciousness that every moment of their lives is a perfect obedience to spiritual law. Obeying perfectly, they achieve perfect results.

This, of course, is true of none but Masters in the highest Grades. Many adepts who are comparatively well known to occultists are, by their own statements, far below this exalted height of attainment, though they are far ahead of us beginners on the way.

The correspondences to מאיר by Gematria are ארן, the noun for a sort of slender fir or cedar from which masts were made, carrying the suggestion of uprightness; and וריהל, one spelling of Uriel. (Compare VRIHL with the Vrill of Lytton's "Coming Race.") Qabalists call Uriel the archangel of the North and of the element of Earth, but his name is commonly spelt אוריאל, AVRIAL. Send us your interpretation of VRIHL, worked out with the help of the Tarot.

Let your exercises in general follow the pattern laid down in earlier lessons. The Divine Names of the Grades of Exempt Adept and Lesser Adept may be intoned at the beginning of your meditation on the sixteenth and fifteenth paths, respectively. That of Exempt Adept is אל. That of Lesser Adept is יהוה יהוה ודעת אלוה ודעת. For the fourteenth path, begin by intoning the name יהוה אלהים (יהוה and אלהים are both pronounced and given their notes in Lesson 4 of this Section). The conclusion of the meditation on each path may be the intonation of the Divine Name Jah, יה, with the descending cadence from F to C, used in pronouncing יהוה but slurred, thus:



¹ The numeric value of this word is actually 148 (Ed.)