

The Symbolism of Numbers

Number symbols represent truths at once simple and universal, truths immanent in all things and manifest in all phenomena. The science of number is at the foundation of practical occultism, as it is at the foundation of every department of human knowledge. Resolve to master thoroughly the elements of that science as presented in this lesson. Thus you will be taking an important step toward the understanding of cosmic law, which will eventually put you in harmony with the rhythms of the cosmic life-manifestation, make you the ruler of your personality, and free you from the limitations of your environment.

Let no fancied inaptitude or dislike for mathematics deter you from entering seriously into this study. You need not be quick at figures, nor do you require a natural bent for abstruse abstractions to undertake this work. You will be able to master the underlying principles in a comparatively short time. Practice will make you proficient in their various applications.

The numerals 0 to 9 represent successive stages in every cycle of evolution, whether on the grand scale of the cosmos, or on the smaller scale of personal unfoldment. The order in the numerical series reflects an order which prevails in creation. It is an ancient doctrine that the Master Builder has ordered all things by measure and number and weight. Throughout the structure of the universe the properties of number are manifested, whether in the revolution of planets around the sun, the whirling of electrons within the atom, in the crystallization of minerals, or in the arrangement of the parts of a living organism. Also, according to a famous relativist, a number is one of the few things in the universe which is not relative.

I shall attempt no exhaustive treatment of number symbolism in this elementary text. It would only bewilder you. What you need, for the present, is the outline of the meanings of the ten numeral signs. You can fill in the outline of number meanings as you proceed with your studies.

Some of the attributions may not be very clear at first. They may appear to be arbitrary and far-fetched. So do the meanings of all symbols when we first learn them. Keep your purpose in view. You are learning number

symbols because they are part of the esoteric language which occultists have employed to transmit their knowledge from generation to generation. No satisfactory substitute for this language has been devised. By means of it an advanced occultist can communicate with a fellow-adept in spite of the barriers of ordinary language. With a few lines and figures he can express more meaning than he could speak into pages of words.

When you have fixed the fundamental ideas of this numerical system in your memory, you will soon learn that none are arbitrary. Then you will begin to see the connection between those ideas – which are printed in capitals at the beginning of each paragraph of attributions – and the other meanings which follow them. The discovery of the connections of these key ideas and the others are an important part of your mental training. You must make it for yourself.

Meaning of the Numeral Signs

0. NO-THING; absence of quantity, quality, or mass; freedom from every limitation, changelessness, the unknown, immeasurable, fathomless, infinite, eternal Source; the Rootless Root of existence; the sacred ellipse, representing the endless line of eternity; the Cosmic Egg; Super-consciousness.
1. BEGINNING; the first of the number series, because 0 stands for that which precedes all manifestation, and therefore is not properly included in the series; inception; initiative; selection; unity, singleness, individuality; attention; one-pointedness; concentration; the definite, or existent, as contrasted with indefinable Source, which is subsistent; Self-consciousness.
2. DUPLICATION; repetition; reflection; antithesis; opposition; polarity; continuation; succession; sequence; diffusion; separation; radiation; secondariness; subordination; dependence; Subconsciousness.
3. MULTIPLICATION; increase; growth; augmentation; expansion; amplification; productiveness; fecundity; generation; the response of sub-consciousness to self-consciousness in the generation of mental images.
4. ORDER; system; regulation; management; supervision; control; authority; command; dominance; the classifying activity of self-consciousness, induced by the multiplication of mental images through

the responding of the sub-consciousness to impression originating in self-consciousness. This classifying activity is Reason.

5. MEDIATION; (an idea suggested by the fact that 5 is the middle term in the series of signs from 1 to 9); adaptation; intervention; adjustment; accommodation; reconciliation; result of the classifying activities symbolized by 4. A subconscious elaboration of these classifications, and the formulation of deductions therefrom. Those deductions, projected into self-consciousness, are mental states termed Intuitions.
6. RECIPROCATION; interchange; correlation; response; coordination; cooperation; correspondence; harmony; concord; equilibration, symmetry, beauty.
7. EQUILIBRIUM; (the result of equilibration, the concrete application of the laws of symmetry and reciprocation); mastery; poise; rest; conquest; peace; safety; security; victory; art.
8. RHYTHM; periodicity; alternation; flux and reflux; pulsation; vibration; involution and evolution; education; culture; the response of sub-consciousness to everything symbolized by 7.
9. CONCLUSION; (literally, “closing together,” and this implies the union of elements which are separate until the conclusion is reached. This has a bearing on certain meanings attached to the number 9 through the Tarot Key bearing this number); goal; end; completion; fulfillment; attainment; the final result of the process symbolized by the series of digits; perfection; process symbolized by the series of digits; perfection; adeptship; the mystical “three times three” of the Free Masons, and of other societies which preserve some fragments of the ancient mysteries.

The meaning of a number consisting of two or more digits may be ascertained by combining the ideas indicated by each symbol, beginning always with the digit in the right hand, or units place. Thus 10 combines the ideas of 0 and 1. Following 9, 10 shows that the finality symbolized by 9 refers only to a single cycle of manifestation. The completion of a cycle is always a return to the external Nothing, 0; but since this 0 is changeless in its inherent nature, it is eternally a self-manifesting power, consequently a new cycle beings as soon as the previous cycle ends. Thus 10 symbolizes the eternal creativeness of the Life Power; the incessant whirling forth of the self-expression of the Primal Will; the ever-turning Wheel of

Manifestation. (See the Tarot Key numbered 10). The number 10 is also a combination of the characteristic symbols of the masculine (1) and feminine (0) modes of life expression. Memorize the numbers and the Key words written in capitals.

Set aside ten pages in your occult diary. Head each page with one of the numeral signs and its key word. Then write in all that is written after each key word. This is important. To copy anything is to make it more surely yours than if you merely read it. Whenever you get an idea about the meaning of some number, make a note of it. Then see that it is entered in your notebook under the appropriate heading. You will be surprised at the amount of material that will seem to flow to you as if by magic upon the meaning of numbers. After a time you will hold these notes among the most valuable in your reference library.

Another good idea, in this connection, is to look up each word in the ten paragraphs in a dictionary. You will derive a great amount of insight from this exercise alone.

During your study period arrange your Tarot Keys in the following order:

			0			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21

Examine attentively, paying special attention to the numbers of the cards. Try to connect them with the pictures. In the numbers from 10 to 21, try to work out the meanings of the numbers from what you have been told about the various digits. Transcribe your findings into your notebook. Do this, no matter how trivial they may seem to you. You must make a beginning. These attempts of yours are seeds that will bear much good fruit later on.

In the above arrangement of the Tarot Keys you will note that the Zero card is placed above the others, to indicate that it precedes the whole series, and is not really in the sequence of numbers. For your information, though you may not be able to use it at first, the pictures in the top row refer to powers or potencies of consciousness; those in the middle row are symbols of laws, or agencies; those in the bottom row represent conditions, or effects. Thus 1

is the power which works through the agency of 8 to modify the conditions or effects represented by 15; 2 is the power which works through 9 to modify the conditions represented by 16; and so on through the entire series. Also notice that all Keys balance numerically through 11, which represents Justice, or Equilibrium. Thus 11 is $\frac{1}{2}$ of the sum of any two numbers in the same position relative to that Key, as 1 and 21; 9 and 13; 16 and 6, etc.

In the next lesson we will proceed to the explanation of the separate pictures of the Tarot Keys.