

Reason

This week use Key 4, The Emperor, as the basis of your five minute meditation before taking up the lesson.

The key word of the number 4 is ORDER, and closely allied meanings are system, regulation, management, supervision; also the classifying activity of self-consciousness, induced by the multiplication of mental images through the response of sub-consciousness to impressions originating in self-consciousness. This classifying activity is REASON.

A moment's consideration will make obvious the fact that mental imagery is useful to use chiefly after it has been systematized, or put in order. Then it becomes useful to us in our daily lives in the regulation, supervision and management of our affairs. When mental imagery is not so systematized we are creatures of our emotions and desires; impractical dreamers, unable to meet adequately the problems which life presents to us. We are reasonable men and women only when we are able to face life's experiences squarely.

The Emperor is an executive. Emperor means "he who sets in order" which is the chief function of an administrative officer. Thus the title is closely bound up with the meanings of the number 4. That which he administers is the progeny of the Empress. She is his consort, subject to her husband, and her motherhood depends upon him. On the other hand his sovereignty depends upon her motherhood. Unless the universal subconscious activities bring forth the universe, the universal self-consciousness has nothing to govern. It is because she brings forth that he has something to rule.

This is true also in man, who is called in occult terminology the Microcosm, or little universe. The activity of imagination is subconscious response to impulses originating in the acts of attention and observation carried out by the objective mind (the Magician). But the Magician (who appears later as the Emperor) would have nothing to control or transform if sub-consciousness did not send up from its depths a stream of images to be classified and arranged by the Emperor. Thus, in Key 4, we find the

Emperor seated upon a height overlooking a stream in his dominion which originates in the robe of the High Priestess and flows through the garden of the Empress.

Geometrically the number 4 symbolizes a square which is a symbol of the physical plane and of concrete things in general. Concrete mental images in definite logical order – “precept upon precept, line upon line” – are the basis of reason and common sense. The number 4 is also closely connected with the idea of measurement, and it is by means of reason that we are able to take the measure of our experience in order to interpret it correctly. Without such right measurement of experience we continue to mistake the illusory for the real, and thus manifest all sorts of conditions which bring poverty, misery and disease.

The Hebrew letter Heh (pronounced hay) means window. A window admits light (knowledge) and air (The Life Breath, Spirit) into the House (Beth) of the personality. It also permits outlook, survey, supervision, etc. The function of SIGHT is attributed to Heh, which is closely allied to the idea of a window. It is also allied closely to reason. When our reasoning faculty is turned upon a subject so that we understand it we automatically say, “I see.” We are strikingly reminded of the importance of sight in this connection in the 29th chapter of Proverbs where it is stated “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

The letter Heh is used, in the Hebrew language, exactly as is the English definite article “the”. Reason is a *defining* faculty. This shows us, first of all, that it is a phase of self-conscious activity because to define anything is to *name* it, and self-consciousness is always associated in occultism with Adam, the namer. There is a curious colloquial expression one often hears which is usually used thoughtlessly in connection with something unknown or queer. The expression is “Name it, and it’s yours.” Whatever the origin of the statement, it is an actual truth when we understand the true meaning of naming anything. It will pay you to meditate upon this idea.

Definition limits, sets boundaries, specializes, particularizes and enters into details. The qualities thus indicated are precisely those which enter into the making of a constitution for any social organization from an entire nation on down. A constitution is the *supreme authority* of that

organization. Laws are definitions, and it should be borne in mind that what we call laws of Nature are simply definitions and descriptions of the sequence of events in some particular field of observation. Thus it is highly important for the occultist and psychologist to understand clearly that our personal definitions (or naming) of the meanings of our experience and existence constitute suggestions which are accepted without reservation by sub-consciousness. Thus, in one sense, every man makes his own law, writes the constitution of his own personal world, and his life experience is the reproduction of that constitution through sub-consciousness. Take this statement literally, but not too literally. It is true only when you comprehend man as something more than a personality who is born, lives a few short years upon this sphere, dies, and vanishes forever.

The first of the twelve zodiacal signs, Aries, is assigned to the 4th Key. It is the first sign because it symbolizes the outgoing, ordered, cyclic motion, emanating from the Primal Will which is the beginning of cosmic manifestation. This sign rules the head and face and dominates the higher functions of the brain.

Aries is ruled by the planet Mars, which represents the fiery activity that is at work in the establishment of the universal order. It is, in man, the fiery desire nature whose dynamic energy is the “motivation of evolution.”

The Sun is exalted (i.e. finds its highest expression) in Aries. We may understand from this that the highest manifestation of solar energy in our world is that which is expressed in those functions and powers of man which are ruled by Aries and symbolized by Key 4, viz., transformation in the human brain. Of all of the mechanisms, or organisms, on the face of the earth, the brain of man is the most powerful. The brain is run by solar force, as is every other bodily organ. Strictly speaking, the brain does not transform solar energy into thoughts. What it does is to transform this energy into rates of vibration which enable the personal consciousness to receive the ideas which, already inherent in the Universal Mind are continually being broadcast throughout all space. The principle is similar to that used in radio where an electric current in the receiving set establishes vibrations which can be attuned to the broadcasting station. The receiving set does not make the music. Neither does the brain make the thought. The brain simply provides the necessary conditions, as does a receiving set, whereby thought can find expression.

The head and arms of the Emperor form a triangle while the position of his legs suggests a cross. Thus he forms the geometrical figure shown in the margin. The triangle represents Light, and is the symbol of the Creative Spirit. The cross represents Life and Action and is a symbol of the physical plane (number 4). As they are combined they represent the alchemical SULPHUR, which is identical with the fiery desire nature.

The golden helmet is surmounted by the conventional astrological symbol of Aries. It is ornamented by twelve points, six of which are visible. The space between the bars is red, so that the colors, gold and red, are those of the Sun and Mars, the two planets active in Aries.

The sceptre is a modified Egyptian cross, combining the circle and Tau, which are symbols of feminine and masculine modes of Life expression. It is of gold to represent solar energy. The globe and cross, except for color, has a similar meaning to that in the hand of the Empress.

The armor of the Emperor is of steel, symbolizing the added strength obtainable from the intelligent use of iron, which is the metal of Mars and symbolizes the Mars force in the human personality. It also indicates protective power.

The skirt of the armor and flaps that cover the arms are of royal purple. This shows the combination of objective (red) and subjective (blue) mental activities. It is this combination that makes the Emperor royal and able to rule.

The cubic stone has been explained in the lesson on the High Priestess, since it is the same as that upon which she is seated. The ram's head is a reference to the sign of Aries, which is represented in astrological symbology by a ram.

The mountains in the background are of igneous rock, which is red to emphasize the fiery quality of the sign Aries. These barren peaks are in sharp contrast to the fertility and productiveness of the Empress' garden. They represent vividly the barrenness of mere intellection, use of the reasoning faculty for the sake of its use with no direct application to life. They also represent the sterility of mere regulation and arrangement unless there be something warm and vital to set in order.

The 4th Tarot Key is intended to impress upon you a clear pattern of the ruling power of consciousness. Whenever you exercise true reason, whenever you interpret an experience correctly, whenever you frame a satisfactory definition you are actually using the power that defined and framed the universe and which eternally rules it. That power, at work in you, is the maker and framer of worlds, and the maker and framer of your personal world. IT RULES EVERYTHING NOW. AT THIS MOMENT, AND ALWAYS, IT HAS ABSOLUTE COMMAND OVER EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE AND CONDITION.

The message of this Key has nowhere found better expression in words than in the last two stanzas of Angela Morgan's beautiful poem, *The Cosmic Fire*:

DUST! Why, the Future laughs at our dull sight;
Laughs at the judgment linking man to sod –
Damning him ever with decay and blight
When at his center burns the blaze of God!
The Force that flung the far suns into space
Pushes and throbs through an eternal plan;
The Mind that claims the singing stars in place
Implores fulfillment in the soul of man.

O GOD, give us the whirlwind vision! Let us see
Clear-eyed, that flame creation we call earth,
And Man, the shining image, like to Thee.
Let the new age come swiftly to the birth,
When this – Thy world – shall know itself divine;
And mortals, waking from their dream of sense,
Shall ask no proof, no message, and no sign –
Man's larger sight the unanswerable evidence!