

Verification

The Hebrew letter Samekh (pronounced saw-mek) means, as a verb, to prop, bear up, establish, uphold, sustain. As a noun it means a tent-peg, which makes firm the tent or dwelling place. Both as a verb and a noun, its meanings are closely allied to the principle of *verification* which is the keynote of this lesson.

Most of the instruction you have been given thus far consists of theory. This is an essential part of your training because it is an occult maxim that the pupil must be grounded in theory before he can begin to practice. It is necessary for you to learn the terms, the alphabet, so to speak, in which your working instructions are written. Nevertheless these theories must be established and supported that is, they must be verified, before they can become a part of your working equipment. They must be tried, their temper must be tested to the utmost. APPLICATION IS THE TOUCHSTONE BY WHICH ALL KNOWLEDGE MUST BE TESTED.

This point is precisely where the teaching you are now receiving, and will receive, differs from any other systems of occult instruction. It is practical. You will be given very precise and exact directions of how to apply these theories, so that you will be able to judge for yourself their value. Already you have made a start if you have faithfully carried out the exercises given with these lessons. They are made chiefly with a view to shaping your attitude towards yourself and your brothers here on earth, since a realization of the nature and true unity of all mankind is an absolute essential for the successful practice of magic in its true and higher forms. Also they are intended to accustom yourself to linking up the various ideas depicted by the Tarot Keys, both with each other and with your experience of life.

You must see one thing clearly in this connection, however. The foregoing does not simply mean that you will be given a set of directions that will at once enable you to practice the magical art. That art consists of the transformation of your personality, and the raising and expanding of your consciousness, until you perceive clearly and at first hand, the laws

whereby you operate. The great trial and testing is a trial and testing of yourself. The Tarot represents your states of consciousness, the principles it depicts are the principles that govern your life, which emanate from the ONE IDENTITY, which is your innermost self.

Consequently the letter Samekh represents the trial, the probation, the purgation and purification of your personality, that it may, in time, become a fit channel for the express of the One Force, a fit Temple of the Most High, a pure and holy habitation for Spirit. Only thus does the law of Verification bring about the establishment or foundation of the house of God. As you progress with your studies and perform the practical work given to you, you are at the same time undergoing the subtle tests that prove your fitness to carry out the Great Work. See to it that you take this work seriously. You have announced yourself as a candidate for Truth. Truth will be revealed to you when you have proved yourself worthy of it. The earnestness with which you apply yourself to this preliminary instruction is your first test.

The Book of Tokens says: “Thus am I as one who testeth gold in a furnace, and this aspect of my being presenteth to the unrighteous a face of wrath. Yet by the purgation of fire do I uphold and sustain thee in every moment of thy life. Behold I am he who trieth thee with many subtle tests. Wise are thou if thou knowest that the subtle serpent of temptation is in truth the Anointed One who bringeth the to liberation.” Note that this quotation refers to wrath and to a serpent. Both of these are closely connected with the letter Samekh and the underlying meaning of this Key 14.

In Key 8 we see the serpent coiled, symbolized by the letter Teth. In Key 11 we see in the letter Lamed, the serpent uncoiled and active, its head erect and its tail pointing downward and to the left. The letter Samekh shows the completion of the upward movement of the tail towards the serpent’s mouth, and is therefore a reversal of the symbolism of Teth. In other words Teth shows the serpent-power as it is before it comes under control. Lamed shows it at the half-way stage of our mastery over it. Samekh shows the result of perfect control. The serpent biting its own tail has long been a symbol of eternity and of wisdom. It suggests circular movement by its shape, which establishes a connection between this Key and Key 10, to which Jupiter is attributed.

The noun for wrath in Hebrew also means “vibration.” This refers to the serpent-power, which is vibratory in its activity. It is the desire-force which is the energizing principle behind all of our activities. This force can be terribly destructive when not under control, hence fully justifying the use of the word wrath in connection with it. Yet it is the power that leads to freedom, the force that always destroys limitations and impediments to free expression. It is really the tempering, harmonizing power that gets rid of discord and impurity. It is terrible to the objects of its disintegrating activity, but the wise perceive its beneficent purpose.

The number 14 represents the principle of 4 (reason) expressing itself through the agency of 1 (concentration). The verification of hypotheses arrived at by the use of reason is carried out by means of concentration. And remember again that concentration is the focusing of the vibratory activity at a definite point by means of attention.

The digits of 14 add to 5, The Hierophant. Thus we arrive at the conclusion that verification is also arrived at by following carefully the instruction imparted by the “still, small voice” of intuition. 5 is also the number of adaptation and desire, and it is the proper adaptation of the tremendous force of desire, through intelligent control that results in the attainment of the higher consciousness; and it is the process of adaptation that constitutes most of the tests you will be called upon to meet. The key to this idea lies in the word spelt D B Ch which has a numerical value of 14 and means “sacrifice.” Nobody ever attained perfection without sacrifice. To be sure, he who knows the value of his objective feels no sense of loss in ridding himself of all encumbrances which prevent his progress, but in the earlier stages of the work one is often called upon to make decisions which appear to involve sacrifice. Experience demonstrates the error of such appearances, for it shows that every bit of intelligent elimination makes possible the expression of a greater degree of power. But at first the test is difficult to meet. Many, indeed, fail to do so, and they are the ones who are readiest to assert that there is nothing in the promises of Ageless Wisdom. Of course there is not for them. There never will be to any who have not the courage to face periods of discouragement, nor the burning zeal and fiery rebellion against the limitation and bondage of this world that enables them to carry on against all odds. You must be filled with the intense, one-

pointed desire to demonstrate by actual experience that you are really what every one of these lessons have been declaring you are in your truest, inmost nature.

The zodiacal sign Sagittarius is attributed to Key 14. It has essentially the same meaning as the intense, one-pointed desire spoken of in the preceding paragraph. It means “archer” and its symbol is an arrow. It is a sign of the fiery triplicity, Leo and Aries being the other two. This sign is ruled by the planet Jupiter. This, of course, refers to the cyclic, rhythmic motion by which the vibratory activity manifests itself. A little meditation will reveal other reasons for this attribution.

The title, Temperance, does not refer to the meaning in common use. It is to be understood in its ancient signification as “the act of tempering, or mixing.” The object of tempering is to impart strength. It does this by properly mixing the opposite forces, that is, by applying the law of Equilibration. This is clearly shown in the symbolism of Key 14.

The angel is Michael, angel of the Sun and archangel of the element of fire. He is neither male nor female (the pronoun “he” is used solely for convenience). Nor is he a person. The angel is an impersonal force. On his brow is the solar symbol, and light radiates from his head. One foot rests in the water, symbol of the cosmic mind-stuff, while the other is on land, symbol of concrete manifestation. He is the true Inner Self.

On his white robe is the Great Name IHVH written in Hebrew characters, which identifies him with the One Reality. The seven-pointed star is a figure that can only be drawn by actual experiment with a pair of compasses, for the regular heptagon from which it is derived is not only not an equal divider of the 360 degrees of a circle, but regular heptagons do not occur spontaneously in nature. Thus the seven-pointed star is a work of man, the result of his development of skill in the use of tools. This suggests that the Great Work which completes the expression of Nature’s laws is an artistic adaptation of those laws by man, and not provided by their manifestation below the human level. In other words, although all human activity is a transformation of the One Energy, it is only when that Energy is transformed through human speech, thought and action that fulfillment is possible. The Great Art of the occultist requires the active agency of human personality.

The wings of the angel are fiery red with blue highlights, to indicate the fiery quality of the sign Sagittarius and its color attribution, which is blue.

The torch is a symbol of fire, and from it fall five Yods upon an eagle. The Yods refer to the five differentiations of the Life Breath into the five subtle principles of sensation. The eagle is a symbol of water, because it is connected with the watery sign Scorpio. Hence this symbolism refers to the blending of opposites and the magical equilibrium which results.

The Vase is a symbol of the element of water, which flows from it in a double wavy stream on the head of a Lion, who represents Leo and the element of fire. Thus this symbolism, while it represents the same blending of opposites as does the other activity of the angel, is nevertheless opposite in its action.

The rainbow represents the differentiation of the vibratory activity of light into color by means of water. Color is a very potent means of bringing the activity of the Life Power into our field of operation and is by means of color that we are able to utilize the vibratory activity for the modification of external conditions. This subject will be treated more extensively in later instructions, when you will receive many exercises in its practical application.

The path rises between the twin mountain peaks of Wisdom and Understanding, and ends beneath the crown of the Primal Will. This symbolism refers to the Qabalistic diagram of the Tree of Life, which is really a symbol of the Divine Man.

This week test yourself in various ways. Test yourself with regard to your own earnestness in this work and philosophy. Ask yourself such questions as: "Does my belief actually support me in the various crises of my daily existence?" "If not, what does?" "Does it promote my mental, physical and spiritual unfoldment?" "Am I any better for it?" "Is it transmuting the base metals of my personality into the gold of real attainment?" "Are my desires becoming purer, my mental processes clearer, my intuition sharpened?" "If not, am I applying myself to the work as earnestly as I feel that I should in order to give it a real testing?"

It cannot be too often repeated that Ageless Wisdom is not a creed, not a system of beliefs, not an escape from reality into a mirage of glittering generalities. It is not a doctrine that puts all verification of its fundamentals aside until after death. Plainly and specifically it declares that its fundamental laws have been matters of experience for men and women of other days, who are revered as leaders and teachers of mankind.

Just as plainly and specifically it avers that such experience is not miraculous, that it may be repeated, as to its fundamentals, by anyone who is willing to undertake the training of the body and mind that makes it possible. And it warns all who approach even the beginning of the Path of Attainment that it is not for cowards, not for the lukewarm, not for triflers. To the courageous, the zealous, the persevering it offers evidences that admit of no denial. It points out the way of attainment of first-hand knowledge and show how to follow that way. Nevertheless it steadfastly refuses to communicate the higher aspects of that knowledge to those who have not made ready their bodies and their minds for such communication. Or, it might be better to say, it never attempts the impossible feat of transmitting to those who are not duly prepared, anything which requires such preparation for its adequate reception and appreciation.