

Tableau 16

The Tarot tableau for this lesson is

4	14	15	1
9	7	6	12
5	11	10	8
16	2	3	13

For the special purpose of these lessons I am using the four horizontal rows of these magic squares, reading them from right to left. For the formulation of the meditations, the same reading is followed for the first four days. The meditation for the fifth day follows the diagonal upward from left lower to right upper corner, and the meditation for the sixth day follows the descending diagonal from left upper to right lower corner. But it must be remembered that this is by no means the only way to read the square. Each row may be read in either direction, horizontally, diagonally, or vertically, and just as their addition is always the same, so is their meaning. But that meaning emerges from a different sequence along any line. The sequences not utilized in these lessons should be studied, as well as those which are the basis of the present verbal presentation of the teaching.

For example, the outcome of the sequence 4, 14, 15, 1 is precisely the same as that of the sequence 1, 15, 14, 4 and that outcome is represented by the number 34, which is the constant sum of every row of this particular magic square. That is to say, the constant meaning of all sequences in this square is represented in numbers by 7, considered as the expression of the power of 4 through the agency of 3. Or in Tarot, the constant meaning of all additions of these rows of Keys is summarized in the Chariot, considered as being the representation of the expression of the power symbolized by the Emperor through the agency represented by the Empress.

But it is important to remember that there are many ways in which this result may be reached. There are four horizontal, four vertical, and two diagonal rows, all adding to 34, or ten in all. And since each of these may be read in two directions, this square presents twenty different ways of

arriving at the same final result. All twenty should be considered, because no two ways are precisely alike, since the progress of ideas in each instance follows a different order. The value of working out each sequence is that, although one arrives always at the same result, and thus continually repeats the fundamental idea, there are twenty different approaches to it, so that variety is secured, as well as repetition.

This week we begin with the Magician and end with the Tower, so that this whole square is in some measure concerned with the second stage of spiritual unfoldment, which is represented by the latter Key. Notice, too, that the constant summation of the various rows is esoterically related to the number of the 16th Key, since the reduction of 16 is the same as the reduction of 34, namely, 7.

There can be no awakening for the inattentive man. He who is content with superficialities never gets to the second stage of unfoldment. By this I do not mean to say that some persons are doomed to eternal bondage. Rather do I wish to point out that all awakening is the consequence of aroused attention. Nobody remains forever content with superficialities. But some awaken gently, while others are rudely aroused by painful experiences, which force them to consider more attentively the nature of their surroundings. Perhaps our earlier awakenings are all more or less of the sort pictured by Key 16, but the time comes when our houses of delusion can be overthrown without the accompaniments of terror that are suggested by the symbolism of that Key. In a measure we are prepared for the event. Experience has taught us that no problem is solved until some structure of ignorance, some Tower of Babel, has been knocked down. Even then it often happens that we are astonished when the event does come to pass. For years, perhaps, we have cherished some delusion. Then, all at once, we have another glimpse of reality, and over goes another stronghold of error! Something we always supposed to be true turns out to be just the opposite.

Our power comes from above, and so do the higher forms of knowledge, but it is at the self-conscious level of our waking life that the transformations occur. Everything that constitutes our environment is subject to our self-conscious thought, and is a reflection of that thought. Self-consciousness is the Magician, is the transformer. We do not have to make it so, nor is occult training directed to this end. On the contrary, occult training is solely

concerned with the right application of our inherent magical power (Key 1). Thus the first lesson to learn, whenever we are confronted by any appearance of restriction, by any semblance of bondage, is that this appearance is itself a form conjured up by our own magic power. Difficult as it is to accept, the occult doctrine is unequivocal. EVERY APPEARANCE OF ADVERSITY IS BUILT UP BY THE MENTAL POWER WORKING THROUGH THE PERSON TO WHOM THAT APPEARANCE IS PRESENTED (Key 15). Thus, the true alchemist-magician looks upon no condition whatever as being really adverse. What appears to be so he regards as raw material for transmutation into the very forms of expression which will best suit his purposes (Key 14). Occult practice, in other words, does not confer magic power, nor enable one to attain it. What it does is to make us aware, through experience and reason, that we have magic power; and then such training is concerned with the orderly exercise of the power we have, to the end that by such exercise we shall see objectively around us a set of circumstances that agrees with our mentally conceived patterns (Key 4).

This does not mean, of course, that the true theurgist, or “God-worker,” has power to impose upon the world around him a pattern which represents only his personal notions of the way he would like things to appear. Rather does it mean that he formulates patterns in accordance with the way things really are. He knows, in short, that he lives in a universe upon which he may depend for every good and perfect gift, and the beginning of all his projects is his recognition of the absolute dependability of the laws and forces of the universe (Key 12). His practice leads, too, to the perfect reciprocal activity of the conscious and subconscious modes of his personal mentality, and their harmonious relation to the super-conscious Self (Key 6). Thus, he becomes a conscious vehicle of the One Life-Power, and his magic succeeds because in every instance his personal volition is but the expression of the true cosmic order (Key 7). “My will is to do the will of him that sent me,” is an accurate expression of the genuine theurgic state of mind (Key 9).

The real theurgist is said to tame wild beasts, because he thinks of all the forces in his environment as being essentially friendly to him. For him, Nature is never an enemy, but always an ally (Key 8). The play of forces around him is seen to be the manifestation of the same laws that are at

work in his own being; and more than this, he recognizes the highest and dominant power in the cosmic mechanism as being identical with the principle of Individuality at the heart of his own being (Key 10). He understands himself to be the incarnate Law, and restores the Law-giver to His rightful place on the throne in the palace of human personality (Key 11). This understanding is his, not as a consequence of sterile speculation, not as the outcome of mere reasoning, but as the result of a vivid interior perception of the actual presence of the Ruling Power – a perception which has been described in these pages as hearing the Inner Voice (Key 5).

In every ritual of initiation, the candidate passes through a mystical death, and this dissolution refers to the passing away of the old notion of separate personality. The mortal, separate man must die. He must be reborn as the immortal man, one with the Father, before he can exercise his magical powers (Key 13). New mental imagery must take the place of the old race-thought. The very idea indicated by the word “man” must be reconceived; and thus we have in the Apocalypse the statement: “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” (Rev. 2.17) Similarly, in various occult schools, the initiate adopts a new name representing his highest aspiration, or the mental conception of himself which his work is intended to build into his personality (Key 3). Yet this new name is not really new. Rather is it a restoration, or a reconstitution of something forgotten. Thus the Oracle tells us, “Explore the river of the soul, whence, and in what order, you have come.” Similarly, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, we read that he “came to himself.” At the basis of all magical work is recollection of the real meaning and power of the Self (Key 2). The lightning-flash of inspiration that awakens us, and at the same time overthrows our houses of delusion, is always a flash of this self-recollection. It is when we remember what we really are that we escape from the prison of the sense of separateness (Key 16).

Nearly always, our errors have their roots in fear; and generally those fears are part of the race-inheritance. The occult point-of-view is just the reverse of what so-called “common sense” dictates. The occult fourfold maxim runs, “Know, Will, Dare, and Be Silent;” but the race-mind has little courage. Popular proverbs disguise cowardice as prudence, and we are all

more or less defeated with the poison (Key 16). Thus, absolute faith is indispensable for the practical occultist. Yet this is by no means blind faith. It is faith established by the most careful discrimination (Key 11). Such faith is established when persistent practice has made the sub-consciousness a clear mirror which reflects super-conscious knowledge into the field of self-conscious awareness (Key 6). The beginning of such discrimination in the mental attitude that the Magician typifies a continual self-reminder that every detail of one's personal experience is a specialization of power and consciousness descending from super-conscious levels; and habitual alertness, the fruit of practice in concentration, directed steadily to the watchful consideration of every detail of self-conscious experience (Key 1).

It cannot be said too often that magic effects no change whatever in the essential nature of things. Neither does it modify in the least the orderly sequence of cosmic manifestation. The magician awakens himself from a dream of delusion; that is all. He changes his point-of-view. He stops thinking of the world as his adversary, stops seeing it as something opposed to his will. Instead, he sees it as his domain, as the instrument of his self-expression, as something subordinate to the Spirit within him, which is his true Self. Seeing it thus, he so experiences it (Key 4). For such a one, all need for artificial means of self-protection ceases. For such a one, all the counsels of cowardice which the world calls "prudence" have not meaning. For he rests secure in the consciousness that even at this moment he is the direct vehicle of the ever victorious Lord of Creation (Key 7). He has transferred his consciousness from the outer rim of the Wheel of Fortune, with its succession of ups and downs, to the spiritual center where there are no fluctuations (Key 10). Not even death can frighten him, for when he has arrived at this state of consciousness he has made contact with that which is unaffected by any external change whatever. In that contact, he has found that even death is an aspect of the One Self. For the skeleton reaper in Key 13 is, in fact, a representation of the transforming power of that Self, even as the other Keys of the series are representations of other aspects of the same power (Key 13).

Such are some of the meanings of this tableau, but they do not exhaust the significance of the Keys. You will do well to make entries in your occult diary concerning any point that occurs to you as you look at the Keys. In your daily practice, it may be well to use only the four Keys concerned with

the day's meditation for the last five minutes of the practice period. But at the beginning of each practice period the entire magic square should be laid out, and not less than five minutes should be devoted to careful study of the Keys and their relations to each other.

Another hint. In each row of Keys notice what Key links any particular Key to that which follows it in the row. For example, in the top row the first card is Key 1 and the second is Key 15. The link between these two is Key 14. But the link between Keys 15 and 14 is Key 1. And that between Keys 14 and 4 is Key 10. Follow out this hint with the other rows.

Meditations

FIRST DAY: Keys 1, 15, 14, 4. I am a direct agent of the Limitless Life. The world that I see is the projection of my own mental patterns. My true Self transmutes every semblance of adversity into a means for the manifestation of my heart's desire. I RULE MY DOMAIN.

SECOND DAY: Keys 12, 6, 7, 9. Because I am essentially one with the Source of all existence, all things work together for my good. The elements of my personal consciousness are in harmony with themselves, and with the super-conscious Life which is their Source. My personal volition is not of myself, but is a calm expression of the universal order. THE LIGHT THAT LIGHTETH EVERY MAN SHINES ON MY PATH.

THIRD DAY: Keys 8, 10, 11, 5. All Nature, and all her forces are my allies. The motive power of the cosmic mechanism is seated in my heart. I am the incarnate Law. THE WORD OF POWER UTTERS ITSELF WITHIN THE SANCTUARY OF MY INNER LIFE.

FOURTH DAY: Keys 13, 3, 2, 16. Today I die to all the delusions of the past. The New Image comes to life in my heart of hearts. I recollect my true place in the universal order. I WAKEN FROM DELUSION.

FIFTH DAY: Keys 16, 11, 6, 1. I dare to be what I truly am. My faith is immovable. For I know what must appear as the inevitable consequence of what I have already discovered. IT IS MY PREROGATIVE TO BE THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNIVERSAL WILL.

SIXTH DAY: Keys 4, 7, 10, 13. The Spirit of Life, which I am, rules all things. It is ever victorious. It is even now the master of every condition. THIS DAY I DISSOLVE DELUSION.