

Tableau 20

The Tarot tableau for this lesson is

8	18	19	5
13	11	10	16
9	15	14	12
20	6	7	17

The constant summation is 50. This indicates Key 5, THE HIEROPHANT, considered as the operation of the power of Key 0, THE FOOL, through the agency of Key 5.

This tableau then may be expected to show how the power of Intuition (Key 5) formulates the energy of super-consciousness. That energy is represented by Key 0. Thus, the whole tableau will be more or less related to the mode of consciousness described in Qabalah as the Triumphant and Eternal Intelligence, said to be “the delight of glory, the glory of the No-Thing, veiling the Name of Him, the Fortunate One...the Garden of Eden, prepared for the righteous.” As I have written elsewhere: “This path is called ‘the delight of glory, the glory of the No-Thing’ because when at last we do hear, the message of the Inner Voice is one of purest joy, and the joy is that which comes when our interior hearing enables us to identify the Self in us with that eternal I AM whose very essence is the AIN, or No-Thing, which we call ‘All the power that ever was or will be.’ The glory of that power is then revealed to us, and the experience is what Hindus call ‘Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.’”

This revelation of the real nature of the Self includes the perception of conscious immortality, represented in Tarot by Key 20. For to hear the Voice of the Eternal is truly to share in its knowledge that the Self never was born, and shall never die. Hence, an old magical manuscript mentioned by Eliphas Levi declares that he who knows the secret of the letter Vau, to which the Hierophant is attributed, “knows the reason of the past, present,

and future.” Past, present, and future have their reason for existence, or their cause, in eternity. Eternity is always NOW. When the Inner Voice speaks, the fact of eternity is a direct, present realization.

Three centers in the body are active when we hear the Inner Voice – the auditory center in the brain, the pituitary body or Moon center, and the Venus center in the throat. Thus, we are told by astrologers that the sign Taurus, ruled by Venus and in which the Moon is exalted, governs the throat and ears. In hearing the Inner Voice, we really *hear*, just as certainly as we hear the voices of our friends. But the vibration of the three centers involved in this interior hearing is set up by the impact of energy descending from super-conscious levels, instead of being caused by air-waves impinging upon our eardrums. In other words, the physiological apparatus for ordinary hearing is set in motion by etheric impulses having their origin in the Universal Mind (Key 5). Such interior hearing is greatly facilitated by the conscious realization that sensations may be experienced without the stimulus of forces having their origin in our external physical environment. As soon as we understand that the so-called “inner sensorium” which gives us spiritual hearing, spiritual sight, and other spiritual sensations is none other than the sense-apparatus ordinarily excited by physical stimuli, much of the mystery of the higher kinds of perception is dissipated. And then we can intentionally turn away from outer sense-stimulus, in order to be in a receptive attitude toward the spiritual stimuli which arouse the higher and inner sensations. This is exactly what is represented by the symbolism of Key 19, and the two figures of that Key are shown as little children because, when we begin this practice, we have to learn the significance of our interior sensations, just as children have to learn the significance of ordinary sensations (Key 19). By turning our attention to the inner life, we gradually organize these bodily centers which are our means of contact with the higher planes. The path shown in Key 18, therefore, leads to heights in the far background of the picture. Thus, in accordance with an ancient convention of symbolic art, the hint is given that the goal of occult practice, the height of occult attainment, is direct experience of that interior Reality which is the background of our external life, and the source of power whence all the forces of the external life are derived. We cannot hear the Inner Voice unless we have ears to hear. Organic development is the indispensable condition for spiritual experiences (Key 18). This development follows

automatically when we grasp intellectually the principle involved, and make that principle the basis of our practice of life. For the subconsciousness, always amenable to the dominant suggestion originating at the self-conscious level, is the body-builder. We have merely to see to it that our thoughts, words and acts formulate the fundamental idea that we are on the Path of Return, that we are ripening into beings having ears to hear and eyes to see. The subconscious body-building power automatically takes care of the complex processes whereby the actual physiological readjustments are effected (Key 8).

The earlier stages of that readjustment resemble what occurs when a new building is erected on the site of an old one. The first thing that occurs is that the old building is torn down. Thus, whenever any person seriously undertakes to live the life of regeneration, he invites and experiences a more or less protracted period of mental and emotional physical upset. Every true occult teaching announces this fact in no uncertain terms; but the egotism of many would-be occultists often leads them to believe that they will be the shining exceptions of this invariable rule. Thus, many who begin occult work with enthusiasm abandon their practice before it has gone far enough. They bewail their apparent misfortunes, and in a vain effort to eat their cake and have it too, fail miserably (Key 16). Yet even this apparent failure is but part of the ripening process. All of us have probably failed again and again, but our inability to remember past incarnations mercifully hides those failures behind the veil of forgetfulness. From those abortive attempts, however, comes the impulse to seek release, which drives us now. Sooner or later that impulse will be fully realized, and we shall reach the term of our quest (Key 10). Faithful adherence to what we do know, and faithful practice of the best type of life that our present understanding shows us, are indispensable. Intermittent, casual effort is of little avail. There must be a daily – yes, an hourly and momentary – adjustment. Continual vigilance, careful weighing of every motive and every act, determined elimination of every mental, physical and emotional state which holds us back – these are necessary to the unfoldment of the higher orders of knowing (Key 11). By this time, it must be familiar to you that the secret of the Great Work is dissolution and how often you have been told that dissolution and death are synonyms. Your old personality has to be utterly dissolved before the new personality can be formulated. Just as the caterpillar's body, inside the cocoon, loses all its characteristic

parts and is resolved into a homogeneous mass, so does the occultist's mental concept of personality have to be dissolved before it can be reconstituted in the New Image (Key 13).

This dissolution is not the destruction of the physical body. It is the renunciation – the total renunciation and repudiation – of the conception of human personality held by the uninitiated or worldly man. It is the reduction of that false notion to absolute nothingness, until nothing remains in the seeker's consciousness that has any affinity with the world's false interpretation of the meaning of personality. This utter reversal of ordinary opinion is the true meaning of alchemical "dissolution" (Key 12). He who regards every event of his life as a particular dealing of God with his soul, acts from quite other motives than those which are behind the ordinary person's thoughts and deeds. The psychological effect of this altered point-of-view is very important. No one but a very ignorant person can possibly believe that his "own" powers are adequate to the work of regeneration. We must invoke the aid of a power higher than ourselves if we are to succeed in the Great Work. Ageless Wisdom gives rational support to our faith, instead of the irrational acceptance of creeds and authority which is demanded by exoteric religion. Faith we must have, for without it we can never succeed; but ours is a reasonable faith, susceptible to experimental verification (Key 14). Our work in practical occultism demands such faith, because the occultist is confronted; early in his endeavor to escape from delusion, with many a vivid apparition of the Terrible. The Dweller on the Threshold is by no means a fanciful creation. By no means does the adoption of the occult way of life immediately remove all problems from our path. On the contrary, our earlier experiences usually bring us face to face with a host of problems which are no less terrifying, because their existence is not even suspected by the ordinary human being (Key 15). Not the least of these is the sense of utter loneliness which often descends upon the occult aspirant, especially if he happens to live in a community where there are few persons who share his interests. When one begins in earnest to lead the occult life, not the least of his tests is that his conduct becomes incomprehensible to his relatives and friends. Often he finds that his work breaks ties which have existed for years, and until he realizes that freedom implies the breaking of all ties, the severing of all bonds, this hurts. Then, too, it often seems to him that he is working without a glimmer of light from above. To all who are beset with

such feelings, the Ageless Wisdom says, “Whether you realize it or not, you are never really alone. Always there stands the Silent Watcher, holding up the lamp of truth to light your way. Persist, then, and in due season you will reach the goal, the goal of absolute identification with that One whose high attainment now seems to you so far removed from your present situation. That One is your true Self. Advance within to the height where He stands” (Key 9).

Meditation is the method adopted by all occult schools for the work of readjustment. The technical work of meditation brings about many subtle physiological changes, among them the balancing and co-ordination of the activities of the “interior stars” (Key 17). By meditation, one comes to know at first-hand that the personality is nothing but a vehicle for the real Self (Key 7). Meditation, too, leads to right discrimination, and to the proper balancing of the activities of the conscious and subconscious levels of personal action (Key 6). No one can be a practical occultist who does not meditate, for the release from the time-bound, three-dimensional consciousness of uninitiated humanity into the conscious immortality and fourth-dimensional experience of the initiate is the direct consequence of meditation (Key 20).

The time of that release no man knows. They who ask, “How long will it take me to attain to liberation?” or “When will I experience illumination?” betray their ignorance of fundamentals by their questions. Not for nothing did Eliphas Levi say that the occultist must work as if he had all eternity in which to complete his undertaking. For it is the essence of occult attainment that it is unrelated to time as we understand time (Key 20). The illusion of illusions, after all, is the appearance that we now are not what we shall someday become. Notwithstanding all that has been said about the higher experience being the consequence of organic changes, the fact remains that the speed with which those changes are effected depends on elements which we cannot possibly calculate. There have been instances in which the transformation of the vehicles of consciousness appeared to be instantaneous. The main point to bear in mind is that the transformation is merely in the vehicle, not in the Self. You are, in reality, at this very moment, all that you aspire to become. The delusion that you are something else is precisely the root-error from which occult practice will release you (Key 15). At the center of a wheel there is no movement. At the

core of your existence is the changeless Spirit of Life. When you have, as the saying goes, arrived at the goal, you will discover that you were never anywhere else. Is this a paradox? It is also a fundamental truth (Key 10). For who is the Speaker whose Voice is heard in the Silence? Your Self. Who is the Knower, from whose inexhaustible store of wisdom you may receive light on all your problems? None other than your Self. To know that Self, to comprehend its exhaustless power, to express that power in very detail of personal existence, this is the sum of true occult attainment (Key 5).

You have come in touch with this work because, even now, you are ripening into the New Image. Whether you have any particular external evidence or not, the subtle power of the law which transforms personality is at work in you (Key 8). Be faithful in the little things of daily practice, and presently you will find yourself entrusted with the adjustment of greater things (Key 11). These pages go where they are sent, and something higher than the knowledge and plans of the human beings who are in immediate charge of their composition and distribution, has charge of the work. You are among the called. You are among those whose lives are under the immediate supervision of Those Who Know. You are in the midst of the process of transmutation, which shall change all the base metal of your nature into pure gold (Key 14). Let this thought be the focal point of your meditations during the coming week, and be sure to make note of any unveilings of truth that may come to you during this period (Key 17).

Meditations

FIRST DAY: Keys 5, 19, 18, 8. INSTRUCTED BY THE INNER VOICE, I TURN AWAY FROM THE LIMITATIONS OF THE OUTER SENSES, IN ORDER THAT THIS, MY BODY, MAY BE TRANSFORMED INTO THE NEW IMAGE THROUGH THE UNFAILING STRENGTH OF THE PERFECT LAW.

SECOND DAY: Keys 16, 10, 11, 13. LET EVERY VESTIGE OF THE FALSE LIFE BE CLEARED AWAY, THAT THROUGH RIGHT COMPREHENSION OF THE LAW, I MAY BE FAITHFUL IN EVEN THE LEAST THINGS, THUS DISSOLVING EVERY TRACE OF THE ERROR OF SEPARATENESS.

THIRD DAY: Keys 12, 14, 15, 9. DAILY, I REVERSE THE FALSE CONCEPTS OF THE WORLD, SUBMITTING EVERY DETAIL OF MY LIFE TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE TRUE SELF, FACING EVERY PROBLEM

COURAGEOUSLY, RELYING CONFIDENTLY ON THE POWER OF THE SILENT WATCHER.

FOURTH DAY: Keys 17, 7, 6, 20. I WILL PERSIST IN MEDITATION UNTIL I REALIZE FULLY THE INDWELLING PRESENCE OF THE ONE SELF, AND EXPERIENCE THAT PERFECT BALANCE OF MY INNER POWERS WHICH SHALL RELEASE ME FROM TIME INTO ETERNITY.

FIFTH DAY: Keys 20, 15, 10, 5. I AM NOT IN HASTE, FOR I KNOW ALL ADVERSITY SHALL BE OVERCOME IN DUE SEASON, IF I BUT LISTEN TO THE INNER VOICE AND OBEY ITS ADMONITIONS.

SIXTH DAY: Keys 8, 11, 14, 17. THE PERFECT LAW WORKS IN MY FLESH TO ELIMINATE ALL EMBODIMENTS OF DELUSION AND BALANCE ALL FORCES, TO THE END THAT I MAY ENJOY THE KNOWLEDGE AND CONVERSATION OF THE GUARDIAN ANGEL, AND WITNESS THE UNVEILED TRUTH.