

THE SECRET POWER

The Hebrew letter TETH (pronounced tayth) means snake. If you will study the form of the character in the corner of Key 8, you will see that the letter is simply a conventionalized picture of a coiled serpent. The serpent is one of the most frequently used and one of the most important in occultism. It has always been the favorite device of the Wise Ones when they wished to compress their knowledge of the GREAT MAGICAL AGENT into a single emblem.

The Great Magical Agent is an actual force that is used every day by everyone. It is cosmic electricity, the universal life principle, the conscious energy which takes form as all created things, and which builds all things from within. This force in the human personality is called Kundalini, or Serpent Fire.

Learning to control this Magical Agent is a part of the daily work of every student of Ageless Wisdom. One step in that control is the establishment of a clear intellectual perception of the truth that all of the varying forms of physical existence are merely transformations of this ONE energy. The world is full of a number of things, but they are all disguises of the ONE THING. The essential inner nature of the One Thing is SPIRIT.

The way to begin now to learn to control the serpent-power is to accustom yourself to think of everything as

being a manifestation of Spirit. Perhaps you will be helped by thinking of everything as the direct expression of ONE RADIANT MENTAL ENERGY. It is a blind force only to those who fail to understand its nature. You must learn to think of it as a conscious, intelligent force. PRACTICE thinking this. Over and over again, as you look at things, remind yourself of their real nature. No matter if this idea is familiar to you; make it second nature by repetition.

In the average person the fiery power is dormant, or sleeping. It is a tremendous force, equally potent for destruction and debasement as it is for integration and illumination. It is a force not to be trifled with. No one should make an attempt to awaken it until he knows what he is about, for to do so is the most dangerous practice known to man. The ability to control it is only acquired after its nature is understood. The conditions under which it may safely be brought into activity are utmost purity of mind and desire, highest aspiration and ideals, and unselfishness in action.

Every attempt to build the above states within you results in a modification of your bodily organism. When your organism is sufficiently modified you will automatically be brought under the proper conditions for awakening the Serpent Power.

Now let us consider some of the reasons for calling this force the serpent-power. In Genesis we are told that the serpent was more subtile than any other beast of the field. The ordinary significance of the Hebrew word rendered subtile in the English version of the Bible is “cunning, dissembling, crafty.” In addition to that the same word, with a slightly different vowel pointing spell the Hebrew adjective that means “naked, bare, uncovered.”

Here is a reference to the essential nature of the Great Magical Agent. IT CONCEALS THE TRUE NATURE OF THINGS BY SEEKING TO EXPOSE THEM UNCOVERED.

That is to say that what we are calling the “Great Magical Agent” is that indefinable something which presents itself to us in various appearances. In each appearance it seems to show itself openly, without any concealment. But in reality every visible form is a veil of concealment for a hidden truth. Hence it is that those who call themselves “Realists” are often farthest from having any notion of the true reality. For them, appearances constitute the only truth. If they enter the field of art, they revel in what they call “naked truth,” and their productions are usually characterized by emphasis upon the unpleasant details of appearances.

The true “REALIST” is he who is not taken in by the apparent openness of external conditions. He understands the subtlety of the serpent-power, and turns it into good use. Hence, in all ages throughout the history of mankind, great initiates have often called themselves and their pupils “Good Serpents.” The Christian admonition, “Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,” is an echo of this ancient custom.

The motion of the Magical Agent is serpentine. That is to say, it is wavy or undulating. It is a spiral force, yet at the same time it is vibratory. This motion of the serpent-power is the reason for assigning the number 8 to this Key, for 8 is the symbol of rhythm and vibration. To write it one begins at the top, and describes a letter “S”, which is serpentine in form, and is the alphabetical symbol of a hissing sound. The movement is then continued, so as to

form the reciprocal curves to those first described. Thus in writing the number 8 we make the same curved lines which are shown on the caduceus of Hermes by the two intertwined snakes. These are also the lines of the movement of the serpent-power within the human body. In this connection it is interesting to note that recent discoveries prove that lightning (one expression of the serpent-power) does not zigzag, but moves in sinuous curves.

8 is the only figure except 0 which can be written over and over again without lifting pen from paper. Thus it is a sign of endless and eternal activity, the Life Power in rhythmic, vibrating cyclic, spiral motion. In mathematics a horizontal figure 8 is the sign of infinity. In Christian occultism it is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, which has been described as a feminine potency. Hence the horizontal position in this connection. This is an esoteric conception with a world of meaning for the student.

Again, 8 is the symbol of the ancient teaching that all opposites are but effects of a single cause, and that a balanced reciprocal relationship between opposites results in the harmonious activity symbolized by the number. Indeed, the understanding of this is the secret of control of the Serpent-power.

In your tableau, Key 8 is the first of the second row of Keys, which, you remember, represents the laws, or agencies, whereby the principles represented by the Keys number 1 to 7 are carried into operation. Thus Key 8 represents the law which is the means of expression for the principle of attention which is represented by the Magician. That law is suggestion. It is by means of suggestions that the force concentrated by acts of attention is carried into manifestation for the modification of external

conditions. Remember that the force so concentrated is the Love force, and you have the key to that which is the Secret of All Spiritual Activities.

The zodiacal sign Leo is attributed to Key 8. This sign is ruled by the Sun. In the human body it governs the heart and back. Among the tribes of Israel it represents the tribe of Judah, and this tribe had a Lion for its standard.

While the Ageless Wisdom is closely connected with the esoteric system of the Hebrew Qabalah, there has been but little said about it in these elementary lessons, because it is unwise to try to assimilate too much at one time. Nevertheless there are certain Qabalistic correspondences which are important in this connection, and we shall enter into them briefly there.

In Hebrew, the name of the sign Leo is ArieH (ARIH), and the letters of this noun are those which spell the noun RAIH, which means Sight. This faculty is that attributed to the letter Heh, and therefore associated with the sign Aries. The numerical value of these two words (216) is the same as that of the noun RVGZ which is literally translated "vibration." This word is particularly connected with the letter Samekh and the sign Sagittarius (Key 14). Leo, Aries and Sagittarius are what is known as the fiery triplicity in astrology, and hence have a close connection with the fiery activity of the serpent-power. Furthermore 216 is the number of the word GBVRH (Geburah) meaning "Strength." This is the name of one of the spheres of the Qablaistic diagram known as the Tree of Life. It is said to be the field of manifestation of the fiery planet Mars.

All of these Qabalistic correspondences point in one direction. They intimate plainly that strength, or working

power is to be sought in a form of vibration which is fiery in quality, which is active in the sense of sight, and which is also connected in some way with the functions of the heart and back. This power is the light power that makes vision possible, and it is also the life power which is actually centered in the heart, and is the energy which carries on the prodigious labor of that organ.

Among the ideas suggested by the word LION are: rulership (since the lion is called king of beasts, courage, bravery, valor, resolution, tenacity, fortitude, will, decision, resolve). We say that a person who has these qualities has "backbone." Since resolution, courage and determination all imply self-control, the lion also represents self-mastery, self-possession, and self-reliance. It may be trite to observe that "God helps them who help themselves," but it is simply a common way of stating that the power of God (the serpent-power) is available to anyone who will prepare himself to utilize it and control its activity. "God is no respecter of persons," The Life Power is available to everyone, everywhere and all of the time, but it is only the "pure in heart" who see and understand the nature of the power of God.

The woman is the High Priestess, the Empress, and the woman in Key 6. She represents the subjective mind which controls the functions of every organ in the body, and directs the currents of Prana, or vital energy. The adjustment of the personality to the point where such direction brings about the modifications of bodily organism, to the extent that it is possible to affect a union with Super-conscious levels, is directly dependent upon utilization of the law of Suggestion.

Like the Empress, the woman is fair haired and crowned, but her crown is of flowers instead of stars. The suggestion is that here we are concerned with organic processes rather than with the inorganic forces of crystallization represented by the hexagrams of the Empress' crown. Over head is the horizontal figure 8 that hovers over the head of the Magician, for she partakes of his influence, and represents the subconscious aspect of the same law he personifies. She is his working power.

The Empress sits but this woman stands, for the Empress represents the germination of mental images through subconscious responses to mental stimuli, whereas the picture now before us shows a more active function of the subconscious, namely, its control over every vital process, its direction of all the chemical activities of the body.

Her robe is pure white, like the inner garments of the Fool and the Magician. Thus this garment represents the purified aspect of sub-consciousness, which it assumes as a result of intelligent application of the law that is at all times amenable to suggestion. White also stands for the divine Unity, and is an emblem of regeneration, which results in a personal realization of the Oneness of All.

The chain of roses which goes around the lion's neck and encircles the waist of the woman forms a figure 8. Roses represent desire; hence the chain is a systematic series of desires woven together. Desires, rightly cultivated and combined, are the most potent forms of suggestion so that it is by definite formulation of desire, in harmony with the real nature of things, that we are able to dominate the mighty forces of nature below the human level of activity.

As the King of Beasts, the lion is the symbol of the highest forms of development in the kingdoms of nature below the human level. He is the ruling principle of the animal nature. He is also the alchemical symbol of one of the most important elements in the Great Work. That work is the transmuting of the gross elements of the natural man into the perfected man.

In alchemical works we hear of the Green Lion, the Red Lion, and the Old Lion. The Green Lion is the animal nature before it has been ripened and purified. The Red Lion is the animal nature brought under the control of the higher aspects of man's spiritual nature. The Red Lion is the lion of Key 8. The Old Lion represents a special state of consciousness which become manifest after the purification which produces the Red Lion. In that state of consciousness one becomes aware that the LIFE POWER is identical with the eternal RADIANT MENTAL ENERGY, which, because it WAS before anything else had been brought into existence, is, in time relations, older than anything else.

The scene is an open plain, in contrast to the city of Key 7. The suggestion is that what we are considering here is the operation of a law that is always at work throughout nature, and is not in any sense dependent upon the artificial conditions of man-made civilization. The law of suggestion is always at work. It is the primary law of sub-consciousness. No matter what external conditions may be, sub-consciousness is always dominant over the subhuman forces.

The mountain is the same as that which appears in Key 6. Mountains always represent causation, and are the abode of the gods in every myth. The Bible says that

Moses went up into the mountain to talk to God, and brought therefrom the Tables of the Law and the patterns of the Tabernacle. The same book tells the story of Jesus retiring often to the mountain to commune with the Father, and of his being transfigured on one such occasion. The mountain is the superior nature.

This week's practice work is highly important and you should make every effort to carry it out. The most valuable lesson you can learn is that of seeing through appearances and the consequent discovery of the inner Self. Whenever you have anything to do with another person try to keep in mind that it is not the appearance which you see that you are speaking or writing to. Remember that his inner nature is identical with yours, and make the attempt to conceive of the real man. This will be especially difficult in dealing with those who, for one reason or another, are unpleasant or repulsive to you. But make the attempt, anyhow, for that practice is more valuable than it would be in connection with someone you like. Don't make the mistake of being sentimental or emotional about it. This is an exercise in mental suggestion. Look deliberately for the good and beautiful in everyone, for that is an expression of the inner man. Don't gossip or discuss the unlovable things about anyone. Make the attempt to see everyone as perfect in reality, and you will help yourself by telling yourself the truth about all men and the power of your thought will be of great benefit to those upon whom it is turned. This exercise extends that of last week to include others as well as yourself, for the work of students of Ageless Wisdom must inevitably result in an understanding of the true meaning of Universal Brotherhood. It is a fact in nature, not a human emotional concept.

Pay particular attention to this lesson, for it deals with the force you are using for the regeneration of your personality. Use it and you will attain the heights. Abuse it, and it will destroy you utterly. It is Cosmic ELECTRICITY, of which Madame Blavatsky writes in her Secret Doctrine: “Mighty word, and still mightier symbol! Sacred generator of a no less sacred progeny; of fire – the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer; of light – the essence of our divine ancestors; of flame – the Soul of things.”