

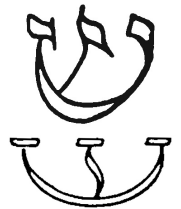
Hermetic Masonry in the Gnostic Tradition – Notes 1

<http://www.GnosticStudies.org/HermeticMasonry>

Understanding Initiation: Shin ש, Tav ט and the Mysteries of the Cross

In the *Sepher Yetzirah*, it says that the three Mothers letters are: Aleph א , Mem מ , and Shin ש (which correspond to Air, Water and Fire), but Eliphas Levi says that the Mother letters can also be “Aleph א , Mem מ , and Tav ט , since the Shin ש and the Tav ט are two contrary and analogous letters which represent being and life”. So let’s try to understand what he is talking about...

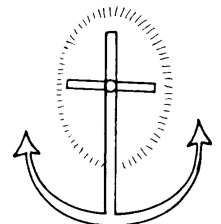
We know that Shin ש plays a role in the “Pentagrammaton” of Jesus, Yeshuah or Jehoshuah יהושע (we discussed this with Arcanum 21). Levi says that “Shin ש, must enter into Jehovah יהוה, in order to become the life of Jehoshuah יהושע”. Remember that Shin ש is the letter of the polarized fire and that Jesus says, in Luke 12:49, “I have come to cast fire upon the earth and how I wish it was already kindled!”



When Jesus was crucified, there was a sign above him that had 4 letters: INRI, which esoterically signifies “Ignis Natura Renovatur Ingram”, meaning the “Fire Renews Nature Incessantly”. This ‘fire’, that exists in Nature, is the sexual impulse in the human being, and is represented by Shin ש. We must dominate this fire, this force, in order to not be a *Lunatic* or *Fool* (one who becomes the victim of it). This is why Arcanum 21 is called *Transmutation* in the Gnostic-Egyptian Tarot Deck.

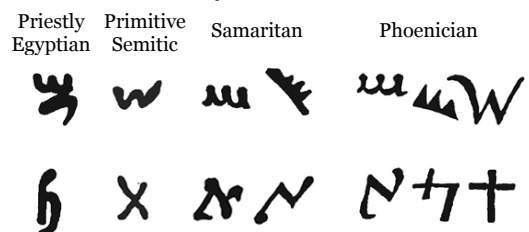
Huiracocha tells us that “Here lies the great confusion for the kabalists, since card 21 of the Hebrews represents *The Lunatic*, and is only numbered in the Aryan deck with a zero... The significance of the card is “errors of the Past”. It is not called *The Lunatic* in the Nordic/Aryan tradition, but *The Chaste Innocent* from Richard Wagner’s Opera Parsifal.” So, again, we see that the key to understanding this symbol is related with Chastity or Sexual Purity.

This further explains why Levi says “The rehabilitation of Shin ש is the history of redemption and explains to us the *folly* of the cross” (which refers to 1st Corinthians 1:18 “For the preaching of the cross is foolishness, to those who perish; but unto us, who are saved, it is the power of God.”) Those who consider transmutation to be foolishness or lunacy will ‘perish’, because they do not ‘save’ themselves. The ‘power of God’ is found in the cross through the rehabilitation of the sexual fire (Shin ש). “We are the author’s of our own destiny, but God does not save us without our help...”



This brings us back to Tav ט , Arcanum 22. Levi says that this letter is “the hierogram of the cross” and that “the cross ... the ancient Tav ט of the Hebrews or the X of our alphabet ... has been adopted in mathematics as the sign of the unknown, the mystery of mysteries, the force of forces, the light of lights, the glory of glories.” And, if we study the ancient Semitic letters, we find two interesting things:

1. The Letter Shin ש almost always has three points, similar to a W, or an E or a 3 (on its side):
2. The Letter Tav ט very often has an intersection of 2 or more lines, forming some sort of cross, like a T, an X, or a +:



Understand, now, that Tav was the Cross (ט = +) for the ancient Kabalists, the final letter of their alphabet (similar to the Omega Ω of the Greeks). This is why Arcanum 22 is also called ‘the Crown of Life’, since it represents the supreme sacrifice whereby one is able to incarnate the Divinity.

The Tetragrammaton and the Kabalistic Significance of the Cross

Here we are in the heart of the high Kabbalah and the Masonic sign of the cross, which is the key of all the synthetic signs of magic. It now appears to us explained and applied to the dogma of the universal analogy of the letters of the divine quaternary יהוה, but this must be clarified...

The name that the Hebrews gave to God, was (they said) incommunicable: it was the expression of the absolute. The great priest alone knew the true sense and had the true pronunciation, and it was said among the people that this four-lettered name יהוה was the key of heaven and of hell, the great arcanum of magic and the principle of miracles. Now this name (which is indeed the cornerstone of the universal temple) has analogy as its rule and progress as its objective.

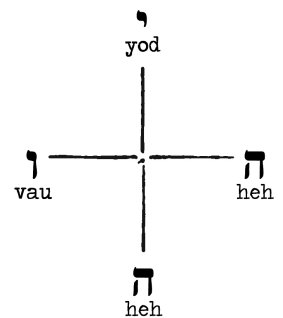
In fact, it is composed of the yod י which, in traditional or kabalistic hieroglyphics, represents the phallus (or masculine creative organ), the heh ה representing the cteis (or feminine generative organ), and the vau ו equivalent to the lingam (or the harmonious union of the previous two). These are the three original and first letters of the divine name containing the complete idea of the trinity of all religions, then the heh ה is repeated in order to complete the quaternary, in such a way that the first hieroglyphic meaning of the word is this: ***Nature results from the first active principle, from the first passive principle and from their harmonic union.***



As can be seen, the divine personification certainly relates to the first letter yod י (also related to the tribe of Judah). The kabalists often also write the divine tetragrammaton with three yods י and a kametz ך, arranged as a cross within a circle and one can already glimpse here into the explanation of the kabalistic sign of the cross which ends the dogmatic prayer of the christian initiator (the *Pater Noster*, the Lord's Prayer).

It is in the mystery of generation that the ancients sought for the revelation of the creative principle. They had found: rigor and active force/strength (yod י); softness and passive gentleness (heh ה); harmony, pleasure and fertility through the analogical union of two opposites (vau ו). Then by observing in nature the universal reign of contrasts (day & night, spring & winter, good & evil), they defined God or the supreme ideal, by the power of good subjugating evil in an eternal agreement with a supreme reason that keeps the universal equilibrium.

Also the name of Jehovah יהוה first spelled and pronounced "Yod heh vau heh", signifies the four cardinal points with their zodiacal oppositions. By pronouncing it "Jotchavah" or "Yod-heva", it signifies the father of life and the progenitor of the mother. Pronounced "Iahuvehu", it signifies the essence of the future or he who will be what he is and who will be because he is. So the Kabalists (following Hermes' universal dogma of analogies) take the name of Jehovah יהוה as the prototype of all that is and all that can be, tracing it thus [see the figure of the cross on the right] and they enclose this philosophical cross within a circle.



The most skilled rabbis do not mistake themselves regarding the work of the great religious revolutionary. One reads in the *Sepher Toldos Jeschut* (a kabalistic anti-christian book) that Jeschut (Jesus), stealthily entered into the holy of holies and stole the true characters of the tetragrammaton יהוה and hid them in his thigh (in his yod י or generative organ), and it was by this means that all the miracles were possible for him, since he deposited therein the secret of all revelations. Those who do not find the proofs, have only to fully read (or rather to decipher) the book of revelations with the help of the keys of the Kabbalah.