

# Hermetic Masonry in the Gnostic Tradition – Notes 5

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## Understanding Occult Masonry and the Gnostic Esoteric Work

Beloved Disciples: You need to develop each one of the 22 Major Arcana of the Tarot within yourselves. You are IMITATUS, or rather, one whom others have put on the Path of the Razor's Edge. Exert yourself to become ADEPTUS, one who is the product of their own deeds, one who conquers the Science by themselves, the Child of their own Work. **The degree of Adeptus means leaving behind the Animal State and acquiring Consciousness.**

Gnosis teaches three stages or steps that anyone who works in the Flaming Forge of Vulcan has to pass through, these are:

- 1) PURIFICATION,
- 2) ILLUMINATION, and
- 3) PERFECTION.

Many curious people who enter into our Gnostic studies want illumination, astral projections, faculties of clairvoyance, practical magic, etc., and when they do not achieve this immediately, they withdraw... No one can achieve illumination without having previously purified themselves. Only those who have achieved Purification & Sanctity can enter into the hall of Illumination.

In the old Egypt of the Pharaohs they knew these steps of the Path; within Occult Masonry they are called:

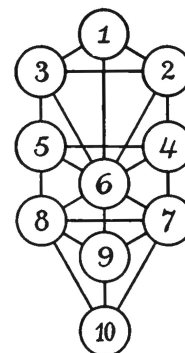
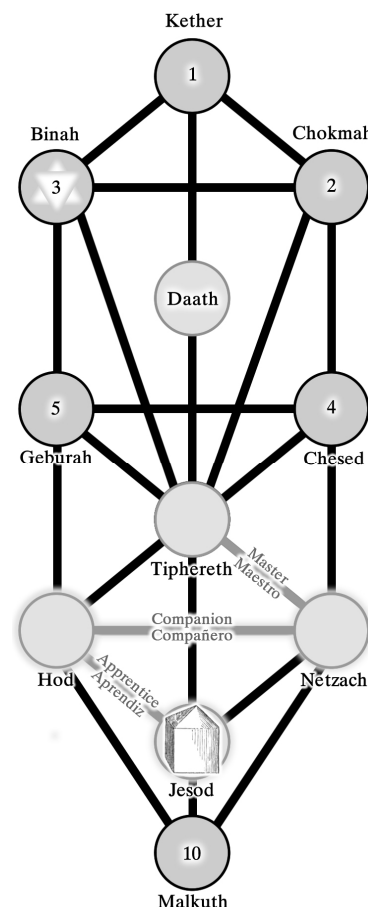
- 1) APPRENTICES,
- 2) COMPANIONS, and
- 3) MASTERS.

Candidates remained in the degree of Apprentice for seven years and sometimes longer. Only when the Hierophants were completely sure of the Purification & Sanctity of the Candidates were they then able to pass them on to the second stage. The first faculty that the Candidate develops is the one related with the degree of Listener (or Auditor), which is the faculty of Clairaudience and occult hearing. Let's remember that **the Vowel to help us develop Clairaudience is "E"**.

Really, Illumination begins only after seven years of Apprenticeship. Nonetheless, Students believe that spiritual faculties are going to be immediately developed and when they realize that this subject matter is serious, then they flee. This is the sad reality, it is very rare to find someone who is prepared for Adepthood.

## Arcanum 9 and Understanding the Work of ADEPTUS

The 22 Arcana, in their essence, pertain to the Ninth Sphere. The Ninth Sphere is Arcanum 9: the Cubic Stone of Yesod and the Hermit. We already know that the 9<sup>th</sup> Sphere is Sex and that the Key to ascending is to descend without falling: to Transmute the 'Ear of Wheat' (the Grain, the Seed) into Gold. We transmute for three reasons: 1<sup>st</sup> in order to not have the Wrong Working of the Centers (thereby achieving equilibrium within our Human Machine), 2<sup>nd</sup> to Eliminate the Ego, and 3<sup>rd</sup> to create the Solar Bodies.



In ancient times, within the Temples, there was a PRIEST and a PRIESTESS. In Primordial Masonry there was a Master and a Mistress. Count Cagliostro tried to establish the two thrones of Egyptian Masonry in England, but he had many enemies... In the ancient Temples, the descent into the 9<sup>th</sup> Sphere was the Greatest Test of the supreme dignity of the Hierophant. All authentic White Initiation begins here. To Transmute the sexual energy means to learn how to overcome the 'tempting serpent of Eden'. Eliphas Levi explains some of this in Ch. 6 of his *Dogma of High Magic*:

"To subdue the serpent, that is to say, to dominate the circle of the astral light, one must place oneself outside of its currents, that is to say one must isolate oneself."

It is for this reason that Apollonius of Tyana completely enveloped himself in a mantle or cloak of fine wool upon which he placed his feet, and drew it over his head. Then he bent his vertebral column into a semi-circle [facing his umbilicus], and closed his eyes after having accomplished certain rites (which were probably magnetic passes and sacramental words) having as their goal to fix the imagination and to determine the action of his willpower.

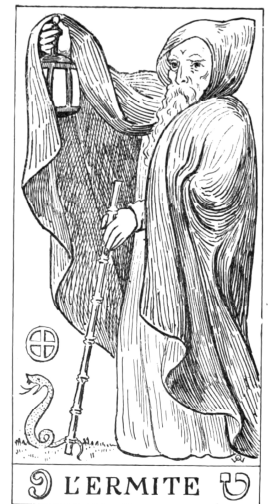
The woolen mantle or cloak is of great use in magic, and it is ordinarily the vehicle of sorcerers who go to the sabbath, which proves that the sorcerers do not really go to the sabbath, but that the sabbath came to find the sorcerers isolated in their mantle and brought images analogous to their magical preoccupations into their *translucid* [or *imagination*], mingled with the reflections of all similar types of acts which have been previously accomplished in the world.

...It is not enough to envelop oneself in woolen fabric in order to isolated oneself from the astral light, one must also (and above all) have imposed absolute tranquility upon one's mind and one's heart, as well as to have left the domain of the passions behind and to be assured of perseverance in the spontaneous operations of an inflexible will.

We must also frequently reiterate the acts of this willpower, since ... the willpower only becomes confident in itself through acts, just as religions only have influence and last through their ceremonies and their rites."

This reminds us of the hieroglyphic for Arcanum 9: a sage leaning on his staff, and holding a lamp in front of himself; he is completely enveloped in his mantle or cloak. This is the Initiate, **the Hermit** (the one who walks the Path alone, who is 'isolated'), it is synthesized by these two words: 'Solitude' and 'Suffering'. The Hermit is the symbol of the Individual Work, the Work upon Ourselves, which is why we must become experts in Gnostic Psychology and in Meditation.

**The Initiate is the one who possesses the lamp of Hermes Trismegistus, the mantle or cloak of Apollonius, and the staff of the Patriarchs.** The Lamp is the Light, the Essence, the Consciousness awakened as it is being liberated from its 'Bottle' (the Ego). The Mantle or Cloak is our ability to isolate ourselves from unbeneficial influences (to protect ourselves from certain astral currents) in order to not allow ourselves to be disrupted along the Path – remember the Internal Lodge. The Staff is the Spinal Column as a result of our Transmutation (the Wand of the Magician), thus it has seven symbolic knots.



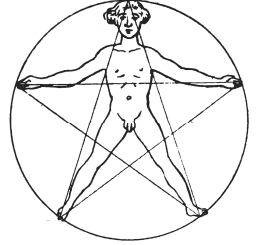
"If you want initiation, write it upon a staff. Whosoever has understanding let him understand, because there is wisdom within..." Initiation is your life itself; it is profoundly internal and profoundly individual. Initiation is neither bought nor sold, yet nothing is given to us as a gift: everything has its price, everything costs. Whosoever is not owed, is not paid. Initiations are payments which the Logos makes to the human being when the disciple has sacrificed themselves for humanity. Those who are only preoccupied with their own spiritual progress, and who do not work for others, obtain absolutely nothing. Whosoever wants to progress must Sacrifice for others.

# Hermetic Masonry in the Gnostic Tradition – Notes 5 II

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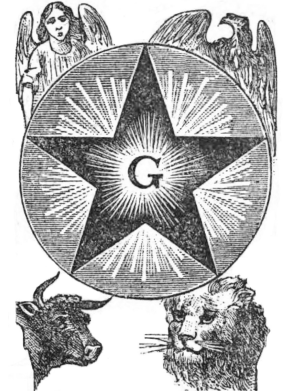
## **Supreme Affirmation and Supreme Negation: Arcana 5, 6, 15 & 21**

We have seen that Arcanum 5 is the number of the pentalfa or five-pointed star, the sign of Divine Omnipotence. Arcanum Nº 5 is the ineffable symbol of the Verb made flesh, the terrible Star of the Magi. The Pentagram represents the Microcosmic Man who (with arms and legs extended) is the Star of Five Points. The Pentagram with the two points facing upwards represents Satan, and is used in Black Magic to invoke the tenebrous. When the superior angle is facing upwards, it represents the Internal Christ of every person who comes to this world; it symbolizes the Divine and it is used in White Magic in order to call the Divine Beings.



There is a term called 'Quintessence' which we can read about in Texts that employ Alchemical Symbolism. This word now means "the pure and concentrated essence of a substance" or "the most perfect embodiment of something", but the original meaning was "the fifth and highest element (in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy) that permeates all of nature and is the substance of which the celestial bodies are composed". For those Ancient Philosophers, the Quintessence was **the philosophical material for the Great Work**.

In Occult Masonry, one has to design this celestial Quintessence through the *five-pointed blazing star* (called the *central fire of nature* by the Ancient Philosophers) which is also symbolized by the letter "G", meaning the *generation of bodies* among other things. Kabalistically, we have seen that, depending on how this star is pointed: it is either an upright pentagram (head up, meaning that the person is going towards the Divinity) or it is an inverted pentagram (head down, aimed towards the abyss, away from the Divinity). Eliphas Levi says that 5 is the "number of the science of good & evil" and "the number of the priest". Therefore, we must choose between good (the upright star) and evil (the inverted star), because this establishes the type of Religion we are practicing, the type of 'priest' or 'priestess' we are...



"We live in the Age of Samael, the 5<sup>th</sup> of the 7; the return to the Great Light has been initiated. Life has begun to flow from the external inwards; we are faced with the dilemma of To Be or not To Be, we need to define ourselves as Angels or as Demons, as Eagles or as Reptiles, and to confront our own destiny."



All of this means that **One must choose their Path, because what one does determines what one crystallizes (what one creates or 'generates')**, and that choice is found in Arcanum 6: "Man between Vice and Virtue". Huiracocha says that the significance of the number 6 is "Temptation"; when the card is upright, then the "significance is Divine Love ... day"; and when it is "reversed it is night, as well as material love". Eliphas Levi says that Arcanum 6 corresponds to "The arrow of love... The number of antagonism and of liberty – coupling – the work..." and further that it is "the number of man, since it is that of his generation... the number of radical negation and of absolute liberty." Levi synthesizes Arcanum 6 as "Liberty & Love", saying "Liberty & love necessitate work & struggle, and it is thus that the great law of creation manifests itself within us". Let's remember that Master Samael says regarding this same number: "Arcanum Nº 6 is enchantment, equilibrium, the loving union of Man & Woman. It is the terrible struggle between Love & Desire. Here we find the Mysteries of the Lingam-Yoni, the connection."

Arcanum 6 is, then, Sex and this indicates to us that in Sex is either our liberation (through chastity) or our enslavement (through passion). Thus, it is the Affirmation of the Internal Christ and the Supreme Negation of Satan. It is the struggle between the Spirit and the Bestial Animal, between God and the Devil; and this is expressed in the Seal of Solomon. In Arcanum № 6 we find the struggle between the Two Ternaries. The superior triangle in the Seal of Solomon represents the Immortal Eternal Triad. The inferior triangle represents the three traitors who live within ourselves (the Demon of Desire, of the Mind, and of Ill-Will). They are the three evil friends of Job and the three assassins of Hiram Abiff.



The Initiate finds themselves between the two triangles and has to decide upon one path or the other: that of Light, or that of Darkness. The problem is absolutely sexual (this is why we must work with the creative energy). The key is found in the Sacred Serpent, or the 'Rooster' who represents the I.A.O., the Verb, the Word.



The Solomon's Seal is also esoterically referred to as the Star of Bethlehem or the Star of Christmas. The God-Child can never be born in the Heart of the Initiate without the splendor and life of the brilliant Star of Christmas. One must work with the Arcanum A.Z.F. in order to be able to incarnate it. **We have entered the world of Willpower and of Love.** In order to enter the amphitheatre of Cosmic Science one must steal the Fire from the Devil...



The Devil is one of the names for Arcanum 15, and Huiracocha uses "Baphomet, Lucifer" as its names. The 15<sup>th</sup> letter of the Sacred Alphabet is Samech  $\text{D}$ , which Levi calls "the astral serpent ... the devil". Levi also describes this Arcanum as the "physical and fatal life – perpetual movement – the great magical agent" and further elaborates on this by saying "the devil, in black magic, is the great magical agent employed for evil purposes by a perverse willpower."

Master Samael says "Arcanum 15 of the Tarot represents the male goat of Mendez, Lucifer, Typhon Baphomet, the Devil" and that the "Mystery of Baphomet is Sexual Alchemy, based on comprehension and the transmutation of the Creative Energies." The word 'Baphomet' should be read in reverse: "Tem-o-h-p-ab", which is from the Latin words: "TEMPLI OMMUN HOMINUN PACIS ABBAS", meaning: "The Father of the Temple, Universal Peace to Men". When we work with the Arcanum A.Z.F. we steal the Fire from the Devil and, in this way, the five-pointed star shines.



Thus, when properly rectified, Arcanum 15 is the 'Whitened Brass' (this is related to the esoteric duality of Light & Darkness symbolized in the colors Black & White). In the Sacred Temples of Egypt, when the neophyte was suffering the ordeals of Initiation, a Master drew near and quietly whispered: "Remember that Osiris is a black God".

Black is the specific color of darkness and of shadows. It is the color of the Devil and of the Primitive Chaos where all the elements and seeds of life are totally mixed up and disordered. It is the symbol of the Earth Element, of the Night and of the radical Death of all the Psychic Aggregates. We need to "Whiten the Devil", and this is only possible by fighting against ourselves, by dissolving that ensemble of Psychic Aggregates which form the "I", the Myself, the Oneself. Only by dying within ourselves can we 'Whiten the Brass' and contemplate the Midnight Sun (the Father). This means overcoming temptations and eliminating each and every one of our Inhuman Elements.